Taisacan wants to move Northern Islands forward. PAGE 2
Man in sexual assault of minor gets 10-year prison sentence. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

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DAILY SAIPAN SPECTACLE
The sun rises Friday morning over the Pacific Ocean, Bird Island, and Saipan.
MARK FARMER

Biden lowers NMI's cost share for typhoon funds

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. President Joseph R. Biden Jr. has reduced the CNMI's financial burden by nearly $1 million by increasing the federal government's cost-share in new disaster assistance to 90%. This effectively means the CNMI would need to only foot 10% of the amount in order to tap this new disaster assistance related to 2018's Typhoon Mangkhut.

See BIDEN on Page 4

» CNMI's financial burden reduced by nearly $1M
» DeLeon Guerrero: The best news for the day

DeLeon Guerrero

T'way launches 17 charter flights to NMI

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Although the CNMI's Tourism Resumption Investment plan program has officially been disbanded, the program has proven itself beneficial to South Korean airlines that continue to increase air seats to the CNMI.

During a Marianas Visitors Authority regular board meeting yesterday, Sejin Kim, MVA South Korea office manager, said that T'way Air has decided to add 17 more charter flights to the CNMI starting this month until the month of March.

"T'way Air will add 17 charter flights this February for the Korea market. No

See T'WAY on Page 4

Fears grow for untold numbers buried by Turkey earthquake

» Deaths climb above 7,700; expected to rise more

By MEHMET GUZEL, GHAITH ALSAYED and SUZAN FRASER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NURDAGI, Turkey (AP)—Rescuers raced against time early Wednesday to pull survivors from the rubble before they succumbed to cold weather two days after an earthquake tore through southern Turkey and war-ravaged northern Syria. The death toll climbed above 7,700 and was expected to rise further.

The last two days have brought dramatic rescues, in-

See FEARS on Page 4

DISAPPEARANCE TURNS 12 YEARS THIS MAY

Faloma turns 22, Maleina, 21

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Today, Feb. 9, 2023, would have been Faloma Q. Luhk's 22nd birthday, while her sister, Maleina Q. Luhk, was supposed to turn 21 this Sunday, but there remains no trace of the pair's whereabouts almost 12 years since disappearing from an As Teo bus stop.

See FALOMA on Page 4

In this picture provided by the family, Faloma Q. Luhk, right, and her sister, Maleina Q. Luhk, are seen hugging each other in this file photo taken sometime before they disappeared in As Teo on May 25, 2011. This photo was taken by their mother, Germain, a year before the sisters disappeared. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store has totally banned the use of single-use plastic bags.
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NATION
President Joe Biden exhorts Congress to work with him to "finish the job" of rebuilding the economy.
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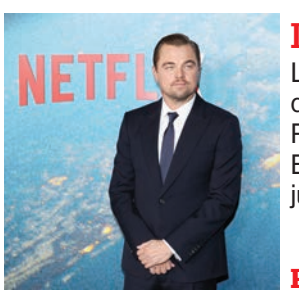

LIFE & STYLE
Leonardo DiCaprio denies he's dating Paris-born model Eden Polani, who is just 19 years old.
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Local

Taisacan wants to move Northern Islands forward

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Newly installed Northern Islands Mayor Valentino N. Taisacan is working to help move his remote municipality forward into the modern age. Part of that effort is to install broadband internet on Alamagan first, then Agrigan and Pagan, for more reliable and faster communication.

Eventually, Taisacan wants to work with the CNMI Public School System to hopefully make it possible for remote learning on the islands for families in the Northern Islands who have students.

Taisacan

He also would like to work with the Marianas Visitors Authority to maybe, if possible, promote the archipelagic municipality as an eco-tourist destination in the future. One time, a cruise ship from Australia sometimes made a pit stop on Pagan on the way to Japan. He said there are a few World War II relics up there, from bunkers to machine guns.

Under the leadership of his predecessor, Vicente Santos Jr. chartered a boat to do supply runs and switch staff on a quarterly basis, but Taisacan hopes to cut down on the time it takes for his staff to go back to their families and receive supplies. He plans to do a supply run every month and a half. While that's in the works, he plans to visit during the summer months of either June or July.

As to what other plans Taisacan has in store, regarding funds, he said "I'm looking at working with the U.S. Economic Development Authority, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Defense. "That's where I can maybe tap some resources from them and channel my office to them," he said.

According to Taisacan, currently, a population of 196 inhabit four of the 10 Northern Islands—Anatahan, Alamagan, Agrigan, and Pagan. About 40 to 50 people live on each island.

Right now, there are five NI Mayor's Office staff on Agrigan, three on Alamagan, but none in Pagan yet due to 2021's volcanic activity, "but we're planning to head back there in the summer to try and develop it again."

"It's my dream to serve the Northern Islands. I grew up on one of the islands—Anatahan—and it's just something out there that draws my attention back, even when I had my family and children. All I talked about were those islands, how we really need to protect and invest in them. They will be the driving force of our economy here," he said.

Taisacan hopes that "the more informed our people are about the Northern Islands, the more support and productive they'll be."

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01
Saipan Tribune was among the **most frequently used** and **trusted** local news sources among CNMI residents surveyed

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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66%
of CNMI residents surveyed reported using Saipan Tribune **"often"** or **"all the time"** as a local news source

02
72%
of CNMI residents surveyed perceived the Saipan Tribune to be **"trustworthy"** or **"very trustworthy"**

03

NEWS USE AND PERCEPTIONS
Use and Perceived Trustworthiness of Media as Sources of Local News*

*Source:
i Minagåhet – Ellet: Reporting the Truth in the Northern Mariana Islands by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council
A study regarding news media use and perceptions, news media literacy, civic engagement, and community values in the Northern Mariana Islands

https://www.nmhcouncil.org/mediasurvey2022/

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Deadline to apply for emergency food and shelter funds is Monday

This Monday, Feb. 13, 2023, is the deadline to submit an application for public or private voluntary agencies that are interested in applying for Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds.

This comes soon after the CNMI was awarded $83,655 to allow it to support emergency relief efforts to supplement emergency food and shelter programs in the Commonwealth. The selection was made by a national board that is chaired by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency and consists of representatives from American Red Cross; Catholic Charities, USA; National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; The Jewish Federations of North America, The Salvation Army; and United Way Worldwide.

The NMI Local Board will determine how the funds awarded to the CNMI are to be distributed among the emergency food and shelter programs run by local service agencies. Qualifying agencies are urged to apply. Previously, the CNMI local Board has distributed these funds to the Karidat Social Services, Salvation Army, Empty Ves-

See DEADLINE on Page 4

PET OF THE WEEK

Becca

Becca is about 1 or 2 years old and appears spayed. She is a very healthy, happy, and beautiful girl. With her fluffy tail, clean coat, and elvin ears, she is sure to steal your heart. She is a little shy, but just wants to be loved. She likes to explore outside and also loves attention and being petted. She is ready to be anybody's new best friend!

She is available for adoption at the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido. Dogs adopted there come with vaccination and discounted flea and tick medicine. The registration fee is $30 per dog. There are many friendly dogs and puppies waiting to find their forever home so come check them out!

Shelter hours are from Monday to Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. Contact them at (670)-234-3647 (DOGS).

Saipan Tribune *is partnering with Lauren Cabrera, co-founder of the Boonie Flight Project of Guam, in collaboration with the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido, to feature their adoptable dogs into loving homes. Whether you are looking for a guard dog, lap dog, hiking buddy, or playful puppy, they most likely have the dog for you!*

Man in sexual assault of minor gets 10-year prison sentence

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Superior Court has sentenced a man to 10 years in prison after he pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting a minor.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo sentenced Abdon R. Teregeyo to an imprisonment term of 10 years, all suspended except for four years which he will serve without eligibility for parole.

Teregeyo, who pleaded guilty to sexual assault of a minor in the first degree last Feb. 2, was also given 333 days credit for time already served and will be released from prison on March 7, 2026.

Upon his release, Teregeyo will be placed on five years' supervised probation, and will pay a $600 probation fee and $100 in court cost. Teregeyo is required to register as a sex offender and be made to comply with the CNMI Sex Offender Registry Act.

On March 6, 2022, the mother of two minor girls, ages 12 and 10 years old, reported to the police that Teregeyo touched her daughters inappropriately.

In a forensic interview, the then-12-year-old girl told investigators that the touching started in 2020, and the most recent instance occurred on March 5, 2022. She told investigators that she was fed up when she learned that Teregeyo was also inappropriately touching her younger sister.

Teregeyo was initially charged with sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree, sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree, and disturbing the peace.

Pursuant to his plea agreement, the other charges against Teregeyo were dropped.

Senate chief wants accrued interest on MPLT proceeds reserved for NMDs

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) wants the CNMI Constitution amended to ensure that transferred accrued interest on the investment proceeds of the Marianas Public Land Trustee is reserved for the benefit of the Northern Marianas descent population.

Toward this end, DeLeon Guerrero introduced Senate Legislative Initiative 23-1 with the purpose of amending Article 11, Section 6 of the NMI Constitution.

Under the initiative, the trustees shall deposit in an NMDs Account—separate from MPLT funds and accounts—the remaining interest accrued on the trust proceeds except that the trustees may retain the amount necessary to meet reasonable expenses of administration.

The funds in the NMDs Account shall be used strictly for the benefit of NMDs through legislative appropriations.

DeLeon Guerrero stated in the legislation that public lands in the CNMI belong

See MEALS on Next Page

Proposed accord: Ex-Commerce chief admits to OAG allegations

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

Former Commerce secretary Mark O. Rabauliman admits to the allegations made by Attorney General Edward Manibusan regarding illegal Typhoon Yutu related overtime pay he received and has agreed to repay those funds, according to the proposed judgment agreed upon by the parties in the case.

The agreement provides that Rabauliman concedes to the allegations filed against him by Manibusan and has agreed to repay the Commonwealth Treasury $2,002.32 for the unlawful typhoon premium pay he received.

In addition to the repayment, the parties have stipulated that the amount Rabauliman has agreed to repay the Commonwealth is entitled to post-judgment interest at the statutory rate of 9% per annum beginning on the date the judgment is entered.

The parties have agreed to a payment plan of $100 a month to satisfy the judgment.

Aside from returning the money, Rabauliman agrees to a declaratory judgment declaring that the personnel regulations authorizing payment of typhoon emergency premium pay, overtime, and extra pay do not apply to gubernatorial appointees; that the director of Personnel and governor lack the authority to authorize additional compensation except as provided by law; and that compensation in excess of the salary ceiling cannot be authorized except as provided by law.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Rabauliman received over $2,000 in typhoon premium pay back in 2018 to 2019.

He allegedly received typhoon premium compensation on Nov. 21, 2018, in the amount of $811.31, and on Dec. 19, 2018, in the amount of $1,191.01.

Aside from Rabauliman, other former Torres administration Cabinet members were slapped with similar lawsuits, including former Department of Community and Cultural Affairs secretary Robert Hunter, former Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services commissioner Claudio Norita, former Department of Finance secretary Larissa Larson, Department of Public Works secretary James Ada, former Department of Lands and Natural Resource secretary Anthony Benavente, and more.

Earlier, Larson, through attorney Robert Torres, filed her response to the illegal OT lawsuit against her, saying she does not contest that she was not entitled to the alleged premium pay she had received.

In addition, Torres said his client does not contest nor oppose an entry of judgment against her for the sum of $36,775, with credit for her surrendering her accrued annual leave in the amount of $9,200.58, which she claims she waived in March 2019, following her resignation as Finance secretary.

Larson, through her attorney, agrees to payment on the judgment because she claims she has not been able to reach a stipulated agreement with Manibusan.

Larson proposes that she pay off the proposed judgment in the sum of $250 per month.

FEARS

From Page 1

cluding small children emerging from mounds of debris more than 30 hours after Monday's pre-dawn quake. But there was also widespread despair and growing anger at the slow pace of rescue efforts in some areas.

"It's like we woke up to hell," said Osman Can Taninmis, whose family members were still beneath the rubble in Hatay, Turkey's hardest-hit province. "We can't respond to absolutely anything. Help isn't coming, can't come. We can't reach anyone at all. Everywhere is destroyed."

In Syria, residents found a crying newborn still connected by the umbilical cord to her mother, who was dead. The baby was the only member of her family to survive a building collapse in the small town of Jinderis, relatives told The Associated Press.

Search teams from nearly 30 countries and aid pledges poured in. But with the damage spread across several cities and towns—some isolated by Syria's ongoing conflict—voices crying for help from within mounds of rubble fell silent.

Monday's magnitude 7.8 quake and powerful aftershocks cut a swath of destruction that stretched hundreds of kilometers (miles) across southeastern Turkey and neighboring Syria. The shaking toppled thousands of buildings and heaped more misery on a region wracked by Syria's 12-year civil war and refugee crisis.

Turkey is home to millions of refugees from the war. The affected area in Syria is divided between government-controlled territory and the country's last opposition-held enclave, where millions rely on humanitarian aid to survive.

Unstable piles of metal and concrete made the search efforts perilous, while freezing temperatures made them ever more urgent, as worries grew about how long trapped survivors could last in the cold. Snow swirled around rescuers in parts of Turkey.

The scale of the suffering—and the accompanying rescue effort—were staggering.

Adelheid Marschang, a senior emergencies officer with the World Health Organization, said up to 23 million people could be affected in the entire quake-hit area, calling it a "crisis on top of multiple crises."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said 13 million of the country's 85 million people were affected, and he declared a state of emergency in 10 provinces. More than 8,000 people have been pulled from the debris in Turkey, and some 380,000 have taken refuge in government shelters or hotels, authorities said.

But authorities faced criticism from residents of hard-hit Hatay, sandwiched between Syria and the Mediterranean Sea, who say rescue efforts have lagged. Erdogan's handling of the crisis could weigh heavily on elections planned for May, and his office has already dismissed the criticism as disinformation.

Nurgul Atay told The Associated Press she could hear her mother's voice beneath the rubble of a collapsed building in the Turkish city of Antakya, the capital of Hatay province. But rescuers did not have the heavy equipment needed to rescue her.

BIDEN

From Page 1

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios released the following statement: "We are thankful to President Biden for making additional federal disaster assistance to help recover damage caused by [Typhoon Mangkhut], which especially affected the island of Rota. The savings covered under this declaration, along with other federal aid, helps the CNMI address its financial challenges."

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) said that this development is absolutely the best news for the day. "We appreciate this financial relief from Washington," she said.

Federal Emergency Management Agency administrator Deanne Criswell announced in a FEMA news release yesterday that Biden made additional disaster assistance available to the CNMI to supplement recovery efforts in the areas affected by Typhoon Mangkhut from Sept. 10 to 11, 2018. Typhoon Mangkhut caused widespread destruction on Rota in 2018.

Criswell said that Biden authorized the federal cost-share for Public Assistance, Hazard Mitigation and Other Needs Assistance to increase from 75% to 90%. This action reduces the Commonwealth's financial responsibilities by nearly $1 million, according to FEMA.

DeLeon Guerrero said that every penny less that the CNMI does not need to pay out or match is a huge help, most especially in the face of the CNMI's current financial situation.

DeLeon Guerrero said they are working hard to validate and make sense of all the federal and local funds the CNMI has received and or generated, expended, got reimbursed, or pending reimbursement for.

"Pennies do add up to thousands and millions of dollars that the CNMI is desperately in need of to address the looming fiscal cliff," she said.

In July 2022, Patrick Guerrero of the Public Assistance Office said the CNMI has been awarded $6.7 million in federal funds to help it recover from Typhoon Mangkhut.

Guerrero also disclosed that the CNMI received under his watch $77.5 million for hazard mitigation projects related to Super Typhoon Soudelor in 2015, Super Typhoon Yutu and Typhoon Mangkhut in 2018, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

T'WAY

From Page 1

subsidy by the CNMI. Prior to that, T'way added two additional daily flights starting last Jan. 27," she said.

The charters, which are a collaborative effort by MVA's tour agency partners, is expected to provide over 6,000 additional seats.

In addition, these charters are nearly, if not completely, filled as of yesterday.

"We have 100% of the sales of the charter flights so we're expecting over 90% of the load factor in February. [This is] over 6,000 seats supplied by T'way alone," Kim said.

In addition, T'way will also provide charter flight to the CNMI from March to April before resuming regular daily flights on April 26.

"T'way will also have another charter flight from March to April, which will be every Wednesday and Saturday. [Also] effective April 26, T'way will resume daily flights," said Kim.

Before closing out her announcement, Kim added that Jeju Air will also be resuming its twice daily flight service in April.

"Jeju will also resume two daily flight service in April. This will provide an additional over 5,000 seats to the CNMI for the month of April," she said.

"This gives us a good opportunity to increase the number of passengers coming to the CNMI," Kim added.

Also announced last Tuesday was the disbandment of the TRIP program, which played a large role in the return of the South Korean tourism market.

During MVA's regular board meeting, all five remaining MVA board members unanimously agreed to the disbandment of the program. MVA, however, still has an ad hoc committee that's dedicated to tourism resumption.

According to acting MVA chair Gloria Cavanagh, the disbandment had to be done for two primary reasons: one is that the CNMI administration that created the program has already been replaced by a new administration, and two, there is no more federal funding to back this program.

FALOMA

From Page 1

Elbert Quitugua, the grandfather of the Luhk sisters, said yesterday that they will be offering prayers during the birthday of his granddaughters, who mysteriously disappeared in 2011.

Quitugua has not lost hope and continues to appeal to anyone in the community to help them and the authorities find the Luhk sisters.

He provided *Saipan Tribune* a picture of his granddaughters hugging each other, which was taken sometime before they disappeared.

"It's a very powerful picture," the grandfather said.

Quitugua said the Federal Bureau of Investigation still has a "person of interest" in its records and is still pursuing the matter. He said the FBI is still asking the public to help by providing information about the sisters' disappearance.

Quitugua said they still believe that someone out there in the community holds critical information that could shed light on what happened to the sisters.

The Luhk sisters were reportedly last seen waiting for a bus ride near their house on As Teo Drive in As Teo in the early morning of May 25, 2011. Maleina was 9 years old, while Faloma was 10 when they disappeared.

Their disappearance triggered an islandwide search for a month by the FBI and other federal and local law enforcement agencies. They even brought in a cadaver-sniffing dog. Many volunteers joined the search. All efforts turned up nothing.

SENATE

From Page 3

collectively to the people who are of Northern Marianas descent, usually referring to native Chamorros and Carolinians (otherwise known as the Refaluwasch).

She said MPLT shall make reasonable, careful, and prudent investments on the funds it receives from the Department of Public Lands.

The Senate president recognized that the transferred interest to the general revenues of the Commonwealth for appropriation by the Legislature as it sees fit.

A legislative initiative to propose amendment to the Constitution needs the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of the Senate and House of Representatives present and voting, before it will then be placed before voters for ratification.

DEADLINE

From Page 2

sel Ministries, Team Koka (Tinian), The Ohala Foundation (Tinian) and Marianas Food Bank. These agencies were responsible for providing thousands of meals and hundreds of nights of lodging and utility assistance.

Those who want to help distribute these funds should contact John Hirsh at the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter at 234-3459 for an application. The deadline for applications to be received is 5pm on Monday, Feb. 13, 2023.

A CNMI board, made up of local community stakeholders, will determine how the funds awarded to the Commonwealth are to be distributed among the emergency food and shelter programs run by local service agencies. The local board is responsible for recommending agencies to receive these funds.

Under the terms of the grant from the National Board, local agencies chosen to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary nonprofits or units of government, 2) be eligible to receive Federal funds, 3) have an accounting system, 4) practice nondiscrimination, 5) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 6) if they are a private voluntary organization, have a voluntary board. ***(PR)***

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500 SAILS

The first cohort celebrates after passing the U. S. Coast Guard certified training for captains' licenses last week at the 500 Sails Cultural Maritime Training Center in Lower Base, Saipan.

Students complete USCG captain's license training at 500 Sails CMTC

The 500 Sails Cultural Maritime Training Center in Lower Base, Saipan, graduated its first cohort of students for U. S. Coast Guard certified training for captains' licenses last week. Twenty-three students completed training for the OUPV "6-Pack Captain's License," and 16 completed training for the upgrade to the master license.

OUPV stands for Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessel. It is better known as the "6-Pack Captain's License" because it allows its holder to carry up to six paying passengers on uninspected vessels up to 100 gross tons up to 100 miles offshore. The Master Near Coastal license allows the operator to carry seven or more paying passengers on uninspected and inspected vessels up to 200 miles offshore. Inspected vessels are subject to more rigid USCG Commercial Vessel Inspection standards.

Many of the students also successfully completed the Assistance Towing Endorsement, which was added to their certificates. The students will receive a Certificate of Passing from Adams Marine Seminars for the USCG exams they took, as well as their CPR and First Aid Certificate. The students have up to a year to complete the rest of the requirements if they have not already done so prior to their class. Once all requirements have been fulfilled, students can apply for their licenses to use their boats for charter, work as a paid captain or mate, and operate water taxis, fishing boats, boat deliveries, etc.

According to CMTC director Marjorie Atalig Daria, a captain's license is especially valuable here in the CNMI. "It opens doors to well-paying professions on the water and expands our local maritime workforce. Seventy-six percent of our students were of Chamorro and Carolinian heritage and more were trying to get in, even after we exceeded capacity. This says a lot about what our people are looking for—to make a living doing what they love to do."

Pete Seman, who successfully passed all three courses, agrees. He said a career on the water has been a lifelong interest. "My family has been into fishing and out on the open water since I was very young," Seman said. "I've been interested in getting my captain's license to improve my safety and knowledge on the water. I'm going to go into business to try to use the license."

Daria was pleased with the turnout for the classes, especially given three of the students were from Tinian. She also noted that many of the students were able to afford the training, thanks to funding provided by the Administration for Native Americans' Strategic Economic Development Strategies grant, Taotao Tåsi – Maritime Career Pathways that also funded the development of the CMTC.

The CMTC will continue to offer USCG training as well as courses in other maritime training tracks such as the American Red Cross Lifeguard and Water Safety Instructor classes, Traditional Canoe Fabrication and Repair, Traditional Sailing and Voyaging, and Traditional Navigation. Information about these tracks is online at http://www.500Sails.org/cmtc.

500 Sails is a 501(c)(3) and CNMI tax-exempt nonprofit organization dedicated to reviving, promoting, and preserving the maritime cultural traditions of the Mariana Islands through community engagement in canoe cultural values and activities. More information about 500 Sails and its programs can be found on the500 Sails website at https://500sails.org. ***(PR)***

EARTHQUAKE BRIEFS

5.2-magnitude quake in Yap

At 3:34am on Feb. 8 2023, a report of a 5.2-magnitude earthquake occurred at 9.683°N 138.368°E in the state of Yap in the Federated States of Micronesia region. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, please contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at (670) 237-8000. ***(PR)***

5.4-magnitude quake in Yap region

At 12:40am on Feb. 8 2023, a report of a 5.4-magnitude earthquake occurred at 9.477°N 138.559°E in the state of Yap region of the Federated States of Micronesia. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories that were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, please contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at (670) 237-8000. ***(PR)***

DELTA MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (SAIPAN)
Shell Gasoline Service Stations
Has an opening for an Auditor/Accounting Staff

For established small business
- Responsible for accurate auditing of daily sales reports for service stations
- Responsible in monthly sales summary reports and fuel reconciliation.
- Will assist in handling Accounts Receivable, should the in-charge is on vacation
- Must have confidence working with numbers
- Able to adhere to and meet reporting deadlines
- Must demonstrate understanding of accounting controls and principles.
- Must have thorough analytical skills for reconciliation of fleet cards and credit card transactions.
- Must demonstrate ability to communicate effectively in English.
- Can work under minimum supervision.
- Can work on a fast paced environment.
- Experience with QuickBooks, NAV, Microsoft Excel (spreadsheet) and Word programs.
- Organized, honest, trustworthy and a team player.
- Great attitude.
- We will train the right person
- On island reference & police clearance required.

E-mail resume to: islandtrainingsolutions@gmail.com
and deltaspn@pticom.com

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-23-014

ISLAND WIDE ROAD RESTORATION, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Island Wide Road Restoration, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity work consists of excavation, placing of flowable fill and asphalt to restore pavement areas cut by CUC to repair waterlines, sewerlines and customers' water service connections. Payment is only for the items completely installed and accepted by CUC and DPW. The duration of the contract is one year (365 calendar days) from date of award with an option to extend for an additional year if exercised by CUC.

The Bid Package will be emailed, upon receipt of a non-refundable payment from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable), after registration at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **February 6, 2023 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Seven (7) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-23-014, Island Wide Road Restoration"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 28, 2023**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other security acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 10, 2023** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Yvonne C. Ogumoro Acting Water & Wastewater Division Manager – via email yvonne.ogumoro@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

2 NMC education majors pass Praxis

Shawn Castillon and Bonnie Sagana, students of Northern Marianas College's education program, recently joined the long list of NMC students who passed the Praxis II exam,

Bonnie Sagana. NMC

Shawn Castillon. NMC

which assesses an educator's knowledge in a specific subject area or grade level that they will be teaching.

"We are proud of Shawn and Bonnie and the other NMC students who have been able to pass Praxis II," NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D., said.

Students enrolled in NMC's education program are required to pass Praxis II before completing the program. Education majors with a focus in Early Childhood Education must pass the Praxis II Education of Young Children exam, while those with a focus in Rehabilitation & Human Services must pass the Praxis II Professional School Counselor exam.

In addition, education majors with a concentration in Special Education must pass the Praxis II Special Education: CK and Applications exam, and students with a concentration in Elementary Education must pass the Elementary Education Content Knowledge exam.

"Passing the Praxis is an amazing accomplishment, and I have no doubt that Shawn and Bonnie will become excellent educators," NMC School of Education director Roland Merar said.

Castillon, an Elementary Education major, hopes to make an impact "on the next generation of young adults in our society."

He said the practice tests provided by the Educational Testing Service helped him prepare for the exam. He hopes to teach at an elementary or middle school after graduating.

Sagana, who is an Elementary Education major, wants to become an educator so that he can help guide students and bring out the best in themselves.

"Life can be confusing and often people just need a little guidance; it may not seem much but it goes a long way," Sagana said in reference to being an educator.

He said it was NMC that was key in his success with the Praxis II exam.

"NMC has taught me the grit and perseverance needed to reach my goals," Sagana said. "The college's School of Education has helped me learn the ideal traits and concepts required to be a teacher that can impact the lives of our students."

After graduation, Sagana would like to gain more teaching experience and work toward a master's degree.

For more information on NMC's education program, visit www.marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

MCS Q2 HONOREES

Mount Carmel School congratulates these students for making it to the second quarter of school year 2022-2023 President's List and Honor Roll. Note that the names are arranged alphabetically by first name.

PRESIDENT'S LIST

Students must have a GPA of 4.00 or above and must attain character marks of VG or above.

1st Grade
Alexandra Stuart
Angel Sofhia Pineda
Avalyn Mae Lizama
Bentley Ellaine Santos
Dylan Jon Pangelinan
Francine Jaymee Pineda
Isaiah Francisco Villagomez
Leihani'Lyn Faith Reyes
Liv Mariana Taijeron
Logan Jesus Tenorio
Rhianna Kay Kautz
Zhane Graeson Jugos

2nd Grade
Ariah Kadyn Deleon Guerrero
Arielle Jane Aniciete
Aubrey Nicole Matsunaga
Benz Elliott Santos
Brayden Kane Taguchi
Carlie Bai
Eduardo Vicente Diaz II
Farrell Huan Dela Santa
Gabriella Salome Gamab
Ines Maratita
Jayven Xander Sablan
Jeremy Sho Sasamoto
Jesse Joseph Gregory Palacios
Ji Yoo Lee
Joseph Guevarra
Leilani Soledad Castro
Mika Backe
Mya Joy Manibusan
Rockson Cabrera
Stephen Jacub
(SJ) Camacho
Vincent Salavaria

3rd Grade
Aiesha Sadie Camacho
Chloe Arnold
Crystin Pangelinan
Denise Kamille Iglesias
Ezekiel Ma'nu'i Villagomez
Felix Ryan Tomokane
Gabriella Jo Tenorio
Jamara Jayde Cabrera-Sablan
Jameson Slayer
Khoen Alexander Torres
Rei Ezekiel De Belen
Scott Jonathan Muna
Youngwoo (Stella) Choi

4th Grade
Aiyana Pangelinan
Aliyani Basa
Chloe Jane Militante
Clarise Faith Garamonte
Erika Cuyugan
Friella Huanne Dela Santa
Jake Peter Deleon Guerrero Jr.
John Damien Sablan
Jonathan Zhang
Kendra Elise Camacho
Kirk Ivan De Perio
Logan Kane Propst
Madden Anthony Deleon Guerrero
Mateo Moctezuma Almada
Neia Dolana Noreyemal Tagabuel
Oliveeah Julee Kaipat
Scarlett Shae Salas
Sera Guerrero
Shierlynde Rita Zapanta

5th Grade
Adelle Jane Kautz
Amber Faith Militante
Chloe Anne Marie Matsunaga
Ezaela Patrice Camacho
Jeongwoo (Ryan) Choi
Jeremy Terlaje
Jiwoo Lee
Karl Angelo Diaz
Kathleen Cano
Kennani Vinae Villagomez
Lydia Xian
Miana Dolores Delacruz
Rileyanne Havanna Cruz

6th Grade
Trisha Juliana Abuan

7th Grade
Alexia Aulene Rubia
Aubrey Rae Quitugua
Cecilia R. Villagomez
Cyril Michael Pangilinan
Do Geon Kim
Dylan Jacob Camacho
Gabriella Aundrea Inos
Heather Elizabeth Pain Sin
Isabella Soledad Demapan
Jadine Nicole Pangelinan
Janessa Francine T. Arriola
Jener Franz Pineda
Jessie Chen
Ju Hwan Hyun
Julius Sheu
Katherine Hwang
Kayla Larson
Layla Carmen Ann Palacios
Siwoo Lee
Victor Neil Santos

8th Grade
Hope McQuay
Iris Maleia Rasa
Jeein Lee
Jose Clarence Tenorio
Josephine Lopez
Juliana Magan Subang
Justin Mallari
Kaitlyn Alexza Drilon
Nicole Angela Pangilinan
Rafael Elijah De Belen
Sage R. Villagomez
Sarah Angela Melchor
Seungwoo (Henry) Choi
Stephanie Joyce Sevilla
Taher Shakir

9th Grade
Asa Backe
Ayanna Faith Matsumoto
Camron Zavier Pangelinan
Chae Eun Kim
Emmanuel Pontiveros
Gavril Myles Santiago
Heleyna Frielle Dela Santa
Jessiana Tenorio
Kern Han
Leonard Jake Regalado
Mya Pangelinan
Nyla Deleon Guerrero
Oscar Bien Buenaflor
Patricia Denielle Lugtu
Quince Emanuele Tizon
Sunny Jeon
Therese Joy Ogo
Victor Nash Santos
William Matthew Cano

10th Grade
Alvin Hong
Chealzka Navarro
Chloe Alexis Camacho
Irie Kane Camacho
Jaeyun Jung
Jee Woo Son
Malina Rose Tenorio
Seungeun Ha
Tricia Antonnette Palacios
Vayden Matagolai

11th Grade
Avah Marie Torres
Brandon Lee
Breanna Sue Mafnas
Eunkyu (Joey) Hong
Gwen Tiffany Gamab
Jan Marini Millo
Jazmin Jay Tagabuel
Jerry Chen
Leyonne Alfred Tolentino
Maria Yoshie Torres
Minki Jung
Paul Santos
Paul William Camacho
Ruben Antonio Guerrero
Sanghyeok Lee
Xinwen Jin

12th Grade
Aubriana Maria Sablan
Brissa Hunter
Carlo Crisdeo Diaz
Clint Allen Irang
Dahyun Shim
Derek Moritaro Sasamoto
Donnie James Jr. Militante
Erin Frink
Francine Monique Albuen
Gerald Jr. Deleon Guerrero
Jazmyn Phoeme Lopez
Jill Anne Marie Mallari
Jose Mafnas
Kayannie Ilifighar Peter
Kinamarie Irene Dela Cruz
Kristan Rose Torres
Kyla Monique Cabrera
Leopoldo Naraja
Leunyce Regalado
Manuel Jacinto Pangelinan
Mathew Adrian Sablan
Moeisha Eleanor Cruz
Ohane Borja
Raeka Shereen Lantin
Serafin Deleon Guerrero
Sienna Jade Muna
William Xue
Yurihana Rosa Sasamoto

HONOR ROLL

Students must have a GPA of 3.66 or above and must not have any behavior grade of U or NI.

1st Grade
Chloe Jodia Mostales
Joevoni Dre Cruz
Kyle Ethen Cortez
Liam Tasi Ehsa
Makenna Lei Pangelinan
Xander James Lieto

2nd Grade
Kiean (K.P.) Tomokane
Miriam Flores
Norris Jr Kwo
Sumai Francine Castro
Yanchen (Henry) Cui

3rd Grade
Aleaya Bermudes
Aycee Rianne Quitugua
Carina Guerrero
Edward George Flores II
Gino Marvin Deleon Guerrero
Jace Pangelinan
Jack Joseph Jr. Sablan
Lucas Chenrui Wu
Yuna Yu

4th Grade
Brayden Luke Repata
Chloe-Mae Therese Taimanao
Ian James De Leon
Liam Michael Sablan

5th Grade
Ava Carmina Sablan
Avah Mae Delacruz
Brianna Palacios
Cali Jade Cabrera
Chloe Cepeda
Daniel Kang
Francisco Joseph Cruz
Franko Ray Tudela
Heaven Agnes Deleon Guerrero
Jianni Damon Abigania
Khylee Ysabelle Santos
Ki Eun Lee
Krish Devjani
Mikayla Guerrero
Paige Kanae Muna
Reef Cole Reyes
Talina Aguon-Mcclure
Victoria Eve Terlaje
Von Derick Lauron

6th Grade
Aaron Chenhe Wu
Franklin Huang
Jaze Enzo San Nicolas
Kainoa Tenorio
Logan Matsumoto
Maria Guerrero
Noah Deleon Guerrero
O-Ren Fumiyo Sasamoto

7th Grade
Arthur Angel Deliva
Cassidee Jolina Flores
Ciana Lei Demapan
Jayson Jared Tagabuel
John Matthew Ellama
Kimason Cabrera
Mary Shelley Deleon Guerrero
Remiegem Melchor

8th Grade
Akoni Jesus Matsumoto
Carly Kate Dela Cruz
Chan Seo (Stephen) Yeom
Chan Woong (Henry) Yeom
Christine Rosanne Castro
Christopher James Dela Cruz
Enzo Umeki Sasamoto
Gabriela Bark
Hiromi Rosa Sasamoto
Jeffrey Concepcion
Kaden Christian Propst
Mei Xu
Mikaela Jane Lobo
Naomi Skye Matsumoto
Patricia Matsumoto
Patrick Guerrero
Pedro Jose Tomokane
Serenity Ann Fujihira
Wayne Dominic Ano
Yukiko Kiyomi Sasamoto

9th Grade
Annieskha Arreza
Anthony Rivera Rivera
Arwen Hannah Bartolata
Brandon Joseph Tesiro
Edsel Benedict Pagtalunan
Eloy Deleon Guerrero
Geoff Castro
Jasmine Meleana Deleon Guerrero
Jhusztine Khit Farinas
Jieun Kwon
Lance Jericho Javier
Luis Manibusan
Michael Mercado Jr
Mikaehla Paige Mendoza

10th Grade
Ari James Toskas
Aryana Carmen Taimanao
Audrein Jennifer Mallari
Chelsy Anne Reyes
Claire Regina Kautz
Earl Pete Jacob Lacandazo
Jada Chang
Jay Francis Dominic Pineda
Jung Hyun Cho
Laizza Vianca Mallari
Maili Peter
MinJun Ha
Nicole Erin Mariano
Rafael Mykel Gozon
Sihyeon Choi
Yunseong Seol

11th Grade
Devin Jordan Propst
Earle Gabreil (Gabby) San Nicolas
Elisa Ellen Blanco
Ethan Jude Militante
Jhazmyn Nhicole Valiente
Juliana Vergara
Kriselle Bryana Mitzy Drilon
Krissy Rease Cepeda
Leo Bang
Palikkun George
Tyana Kisha Tesiro

12th Grade
Lady Vanessa Dancoe
Sophia Michelle Cornelio
Vidal Jose Camacho

Rip currents seen until Sunday night

The public is being warned of a high risk of rip currents through late Sunday night.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, dangerous rip currents are present in east-facing reefs of the Marianas. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

An east swell is expected to further diminish slightly, causing rip risk to briefly fall to moderate throughout the next 24 hours. However, east swell rebuilds again starting today, Thursday.

The public is being advised to stay out of the water along east facing reef lines. Swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(PR)***

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: ANUNCIACION MENDIOLA CAMACHO MAGOFNA a.k.a."ASAKO" Decedent.

• CIVIL ACTION NO. 19-0210
• NOTICE OF HEARING ON CLAIM FOR HEIRSHIP AND NOTICE TO POTENTIAL HEIRS
• Date: February 27, 2023 Time: 1:30 p.m.
• Judge: Hon. Kenneth L. Govendo

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a hearing on the Claim for Heirship in the Estate of Anunciacion Mendiola Camacho Magofna, is scheduled to be heard on **February 27, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.**, in the Guma Hustisia, Imwal Aweewe, House of Justice, in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Any and all claims for heirship of Anunciacion Mendiola Camacho Magofna or her estate is hereby required to be filed with the Clerk of Court on or before **February 26, 2023**. This notice shall be published three times in two newspapers of general circulation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SO ORDERED this 28th day of December, 2022.

HON. KENNETH L. GOVENDO,
Associate Judge

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RPF23-OGM/CHCC No. 42300030

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 02, 2023 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"2022 CHCC 176K Solar PV Design-Built Integration Project"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT HORIGUCHI BLDG, GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARINGHOUSE, EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA JR. AT (670) 237-2200

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT

/S/ VIVIAN M. LIZAMA
ACTING DIRECTOR, P.S.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Kids need their shots: More kids should get their COVID vaccine; it'll save lives

Remember COVID? A mutated version of the virus that not long ago dominated our lives is still killing more than 500 Americans per day on average—adding to a 1.1 million grim national total. Here in New York City, 13 people are dying on average each day, nothing to sneeze at for those who care about preventing suffering.

The bivalent vaccine booster is still the best way to head off severe disease and death. It doesn't stop the pathogen's spread, but it does make it far less likely that someone infected will have to be hospitalized or worse. Older New Yorkers, who are at the greatest risk by far, ought to be most focused on getting the shot.

But people of all ages benefit from the additional layer of protection. Even kids.

As we've said many times, children are far less likely to be seriously sickened by COVID than any other age group, a fact that was lost on those who pushed for too long to keep schools closed. But given the vast number of infections, children still too often get very sick. The vaccine is the simplest step to ensure that infection remains a relatively minor health event.

A new study puts the risk in perspective. Analyzing data on child mortality, the authors found that COVID-19 is "the top (first) leading cause of death among infectious and respiratory diseases."

More to the point, COVID-19 caused substantially more deaths than other vaccine-preventable diseases did before shots stopped them in their tracks. In the one-year period from Aug. 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022, there were 821 U.S. COVID deaths among young people. Compare that to hepatitis A (three reported deaths in the year before its vaccine became widely available), rotavirus (20-60), rubella (17) and varicella (50).

Despite the relatively small threat in those cases, that level of child mortality triggered vaccines being widely mandated, including becoming a prerequisite for school attendance. Why should COVID, which is deadlier, be the exception?

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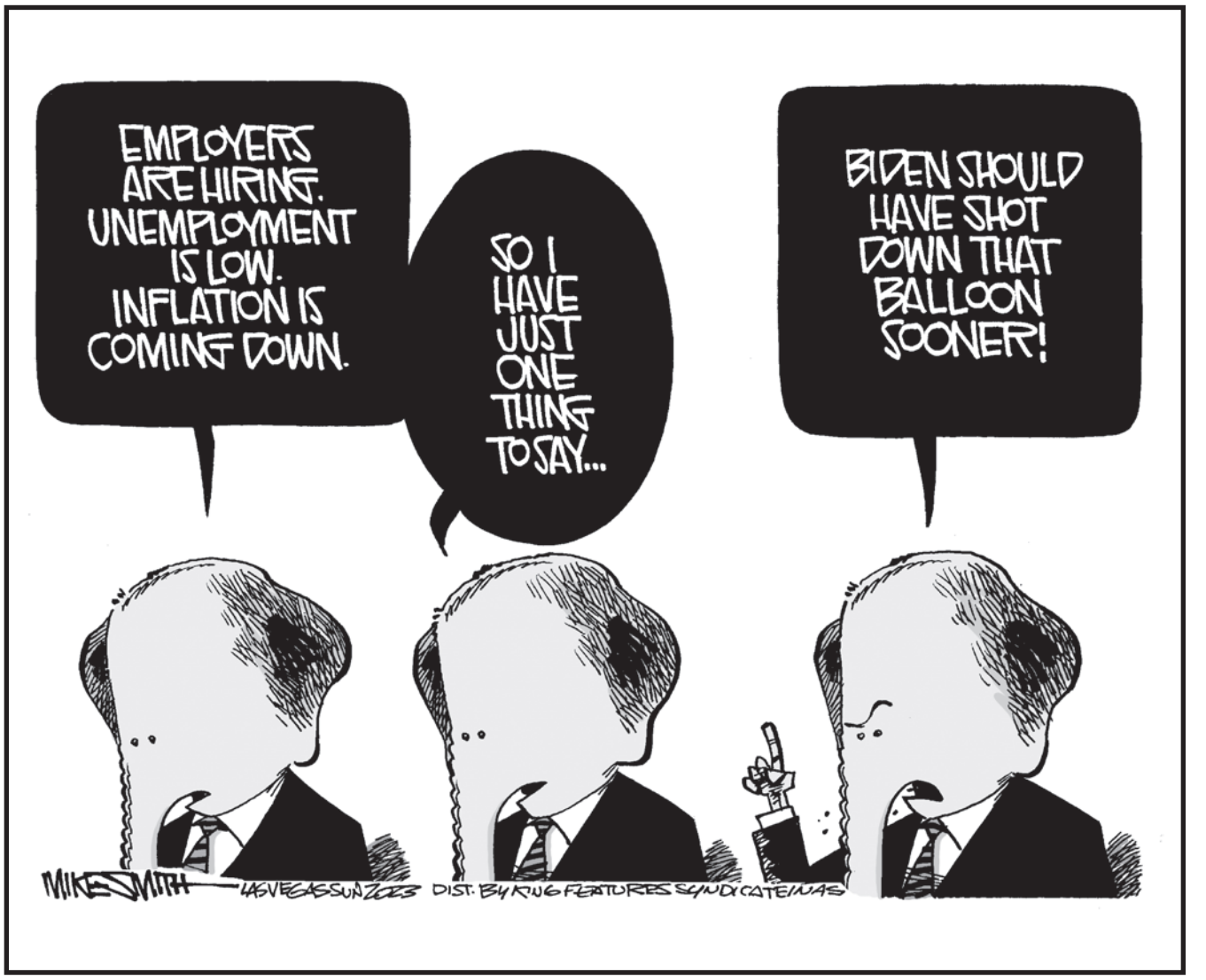
As reunifications continue, family separation cannot be forgotten

Despite the dedicated efforts of a task force set up to facilitate reunifications, about a thousand migrant children separated from their parents, most under the now-infamous 2018 zero tolerance policy, remain separated. Even if all are eventually reunited, the scars left will be indelible.

See FAMILY on Next Page


EMPLOYERS ARE HIRING. UNEMPLOYMENT IS LOW. INFLATION IS COMING DOWN.
SO I HAVE JUST ONE THING TO SAY...
BIDEN SHOULD HAVE SHOT DOWN THAT BALLOON SOONER!
MIKE SMITH LAS VEGAS SUN 2023
DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE INAS

How should you talk to ChatGPT? A user's guide

By TYLER COWEN
Bloomberg Opinion

Tyler Cowen is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist. He is a professor of economics at George Mason University and writes for the blog Marginal Revolution. He is coauthor of* Talent: How to Identify Energizers, Creatives, and Winners Around the World.

About 100 million people used ChatGPT in the month of January, according to one estimate, which would be the fastest-growing user base ever. Yet I often speak to people who are less than impressed with ChatGPT, citing its mistakes and banalities, and they suggest it is a passing fad.

In response, allow me to offer a short guide to using ChatGPT. It can do many things for you—organize your notes, correct your grammar, work with mathematical symbols. But I will focus on the most basic use: querying it. To use it well, you need to let go of some of your intuitions about talking to humans. ChatGPT is a bot.

If you are talking to a human and he or she doesn't understand you, you might make your question simpler. That is exactly the wrong tack to take with ChatGPT. You will get a better result by making your question more detailed and complex.

Ask ChatGPT "What is Marxism?" for example, and you will get a passable answer, probably no better than what you would get by using Wikipedia or Google. Instead, make the question more specific: "Which were the important developments in French Marxism in the second half of the 19th century?" ChatGPT will do much better—and it's also the kind of question it's hard to use Google and Wikipedia to answer.

ChatGPT will do better yet if you ask it sequential questions along an evolving line of inquiry. Ask it about the specific French Marxists it cites, what they did, and how they differed from their German counterparts. Keep on going.

ChatGPT does especially well at "compare and contrast." In essence, ChatGPT needs you to point it in the right direction. A finely honed question gives it more fixed points of reference. You need to set the mood and tone and intellectual level of your question, depending on the kind of answer you want. It's not unlike trying to steer the conversation at a dinner party. Or, to use another analogy, think of working with ChatGPT as like training a dog.

Another way to hone ChatGPT's capabilities is to ask it for responses in the voice of a third person. Ask, "What are the costs of inflation?" and you might get answers that aren't wrong exactly, but neither are they impressive. Instead, try this: "What are the costs of inflation? Please answer using the ideas of Milton Friedman."

By mentioning Friedman, you have pointed it to a more intelligent corner of the ideas universe. If Friedman isn't the right guide for you, choose another economist (don't forget yours truly!). Better yet, ask it to compare and contrast the views of two economists.

To understand this unusual behavior, it helps to know a bit about how these models work. They do not reason, and they do not consult the internet (though they have read the internet previously). Instead, ChatGPT works by trying to predict which words should come next to provide a likely and satisfying answer.

Here is a simple example: If I said, "The Star-Spangled [blank]," you would probably guess the next word is "Banner," because the US national anthem is called "The Star-Spangled Banner," and you often hear those words in that order. That challenge is an easy one, but for most questions or prompts the proper sequence isn't so obvious. ChatGPT needs some guidance from you to set off in the right direction. Act like a dog trainer and let it know what you are looking for.

ChatGPT is most likely to go wrong when it is trying too hard to please you. I have found that it creates associations, affiliations, co-authorships and even marriages that do not exist. I was recently using it with the legal scholar Cass Sunstein, a former Bloomberg Opinion columnist, and we asked it whether the two of us had written a book together. The genius of ChatGPT is that it hit upon exactly the book we might have written, given our overlapping areas of research interest—a book on the philosophical foundations of cost-benefit analysis.

The absurdity is that no such co-authored book exists. Perhaps ChatGPT has been trained on bodies of text where most queries of affiliation are answered in the affirmative, and so to fulfill its task of predicting words well, it will make things up. So while it is wonderful for helping with your workflow or generating ideas, ChatGPT is not good as a fact-checker.

I didn't use ChatGPT in drafting this column, by the way. If I had, however, I know exactly how I would have phrased my query—and I would have been sure to ask for something in the style of Tyler Cowen.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Nuclear threats? Climate change? What catastrophe will lead to doomsday?

By ALEX WELLERSTEIN
Los Angeles Times

Alex Wellerstein is a historian of nuclear weapons at the Stevens Institute of Technology, the author of Restricted Data: The History of Nuclear Secrecy in the United States *and the creator of the Nukemap online nuclear weapons simulator.*

If you needed a reminder that all is not well with the world, the Doomsday Clock moved forward once again in January. It's now set for 90 seconds until midnight—closer to doom than ever before.

The last time it changed was in 2020, when the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists—which created the clock in 1947—jumped it forward 20 seconds. The group attributed this year's time shift mostly to Russia's war in Ukraine, now almost at its one-year mark. They also cite concerns relating to climate change, biological threats and disruptive cybertechnologies.

The war in Ukraine has clearly brought fears of a large-scale nuclear war back to the forefront. Neither Russia and the U.S. nor NATO is eager for nuclear destruction, but the history of nuclear weapons is full of reminders that miscalculation and accidents—to say nothing of newer threats like misinformation and cyberattacks—could lead to brushes with annihilation.

The Doomsday Clock is, of course, a subjective measure of current risk. It was never meant to be a scientific instrument. In the last 10 years, it has marched closer to midnight five times, and it retreated just once since 1991. That might sound pessimistic. But let's be honest: The 21st century hasn't exactly felt like it is trending in the right direction.

The Bulletin was founded in late 1945 by scientists who were connected to the invention of the atomic bomb. They believed that once mushroom clouds rose over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, scientists could no longer be disengaged from the world of politics. The Bulletin aimed to draw scientists into discussions about their responsibilities in dealing with the new problems created by nuclear technology, and to make sure the public had independent, expert assessments of these new threats.

But it took a few years more for the publication to become an official doomsayer. The Doomsday Clock's original design and setting, seven minutes to midnight, were purely aesthetic choices. Only in 1949, when its clock hands were moved for the first time following the Soviet Union's first atomic bomb test, did it start being understood as some kind of measurement of existential risk. In its early years, the Bulletin's founding editor in chief, physicist Eugene Rabinowitch, determined all of the clock's changes. After his death in 1973, the changes were handled by the Bulletin's board of directors and, as of 2008, by a science and security board composed of experts.

That year, the Bulletin expanded the clock's symbolism—from almost exclusively a measure of nuclear risk to encompassing other existential threats, particularly climate change, as well as biological and cyberthreats.

That decision was understandable, since concerns over nuclear war were being eclipsed by growing awareness of climate change—with more extreme weather events, intensifying droughts, migration pressures and disease risks. But the nuclear threat didn't go away, as we've seen again and again since then.

The changes to what the Doomsday Clock measures also highlight the symbol's biggest problem. "Midnight" implies a finality: the end-of-the-world hard stop that we associate with nuclear war. But even nuclear war wouldn't be quite so abrupt; there would be a lot of survivors, even in the nations that were directly attacked, and they would have to deal with whatever came next. As catastrophic as nuclear strikes could be, they wouldn't be the end of history. The tragic stories we read of Hiroshima are not of the people who died immediately, but of survivors who had to rebuild their lives, city and nation.

Climate change is a different kind of risk altogether. There won't be some single abrupt event that ends the world. It's what scholars call a "slow disaster," something that will unfold over decades, even centuries. It'll just be a world that gets harder to live in, with devastating local disasters, worsening weather extremes and growing systemic problems. But there will be no single Earth-killing moment. The symbol of this kind of threat isn't a clock—it's one of those ever-proliferating graphs that shows the temperature going upwards into new highs.

These realities may put the experts at the Bulletin in a bind: Under what conditions will they feel confident turning the clock back to announce decreasing risk? If climate change means runaway risk, at least in our lifetimes, they will eventually run out of time before tripping into "midnight."

There is an almost comic effect of counting doomsday by ever smaller moments. If the clock starts counting in milliseconds, it might seem farcical. By then we'll have run out of time, and the symbol won't matter much as a warning.

Nuclear risk can seem to wax and wane very quickly: One day, things can seem good, but a week later a new crisis might rear its head. Then during a crisis, all can seem hopeless, but a year later, things might cool substantially. Climate change, conversely, offers neither a sudden threat nor the hope of quick resolution. But there are still ways in which we can slow its pace, mitigate its consequences and, over a long time, reverse its trends.

The Doomsday Clock has been a potent messaging device for nuclear scares. But we're now confronting another man-made form of annihilation that might well need a new kind of symbol. Whether these symbols will be enough to motivate real action is, ultimately, up to us.

February is Black History Month

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

As part of Black History Month I would like to pay respects to two Black attorneys who have left their mark in CNMI history and a Black poet who has inspired me.

Attorney William Nabors, deceased, worked on settlement of the Micronesian War Claims and as counsel for the Northern Marianas District Legislature. Bill married Tinian representative Serafina King and their son, Karl King-Nabors, is currently serving in the CNMI Legislature as a senator representing Tinian. Attorney Joseph "Joe" Hill has practiced law in the CNMI for decades. He has also practiced law in Alaska, Japan, and Las Vegas, NV. Joe is still practicing law in Susupe and is a wealth of information and stories about the early days of the Commonwealth.

Countee Cullen, at the age of 22, published *COLOR*, his first collection of poetry in 1925. He was an acclaimed poet, accomplished essayist, translator, and novelist. My inspiration comes from a book: *MY SOUL'S HIGH SONG, The Collected Writings of Countee Cullen, Voice of the Harlem Renaissance*.

My February theme is love poems: Some borrowed and some are blue

Some old ones and several are new; wherever a variety of love roams.

"While nameless birds from grove and blossomed bend
Deluged my soul with song; if it were meet
To love Life so, then Love will but complete
My Joy, for Life with Love can never end."
—Excerpt, *From* Life To Love, by Countee Cullen, 1925.

To Todos Taotao Tinian with Love

(All my love for Rose M., Rosie L., Rosita K., kumaire Rose P. and all the flowers, birds, families, nature on the beach, village, and field)

Inspiration from ladies named Rose, roses for love, and Countee Cullen

Who wrote beautifully in his 20s of what heartstrings he was pulling

I'm 73 years of age and still enjoy writing sonnets and love poems

Losing my short-term memory but my long-term memory still roams

Typhoons and following rough seas have not been my good friend

Down many dusty coral roads I walk with rubber zoris on my feet

Flame tree flowers fall yet jungle gardenias still smell so so sweet

With bad knees jerking and more arthritic joints I bend
Birds sing in the boonies, butterflies , putitainobiu send
Messages to sweethearts whenever we chance to meet
A love for life, a love somewhat somehow incomplete
Where Platonic loving and longing will seldom ever end
The beauty of Tinian island among the best I've ever seen
From East to West coast with Marpo Valley in between.

FAMILY

From Page 8

There's a reason this has become the symbol for Donald Trump and White House adviser Stephen Miller's restrict-immigration-at-all-costs depravity. Most people, no matter how committed to their ideologies, still draw the line at intentionally harming and traumatizing children for a political end, let alone for punishing people whose transgression was seeking a better life.

With Trump's departure from the White House, the plight of these children and their parents have largely faded from headlines and from public consciousness. Yet this is a horror that we must never forget, and never forgive, especially as it was done in our name.

Despite mealy-mouthed claims that separations were merely incidental, we know for a fact this was an explicit goal—then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions said "We need to take away children." We know the authorities failed to make any plans for reunification or even properly record separations; that the separations often involved directly lying to and threatening parents; that parents were deported without their children; that children were left with unprepared contractors in substandard conditions; and that many of the people who directed all this tried to spin, obfuscate and otherwise hide what they'd done.

All this has been unearthed via dogged reporting and oversight by government inspectors general and Congress, who to their credit have stepped up to their investigative roles and not let go. Yet none of those who conceptualized and directed this heinous act—not Sessions, not Miller, not former Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, not Trump—have faced real consequences for something we might demand tribunals for were it to have occurred abroad. In a just world, they might have faced a judge, but at the very least, they should never be allowed near the levers of power again.

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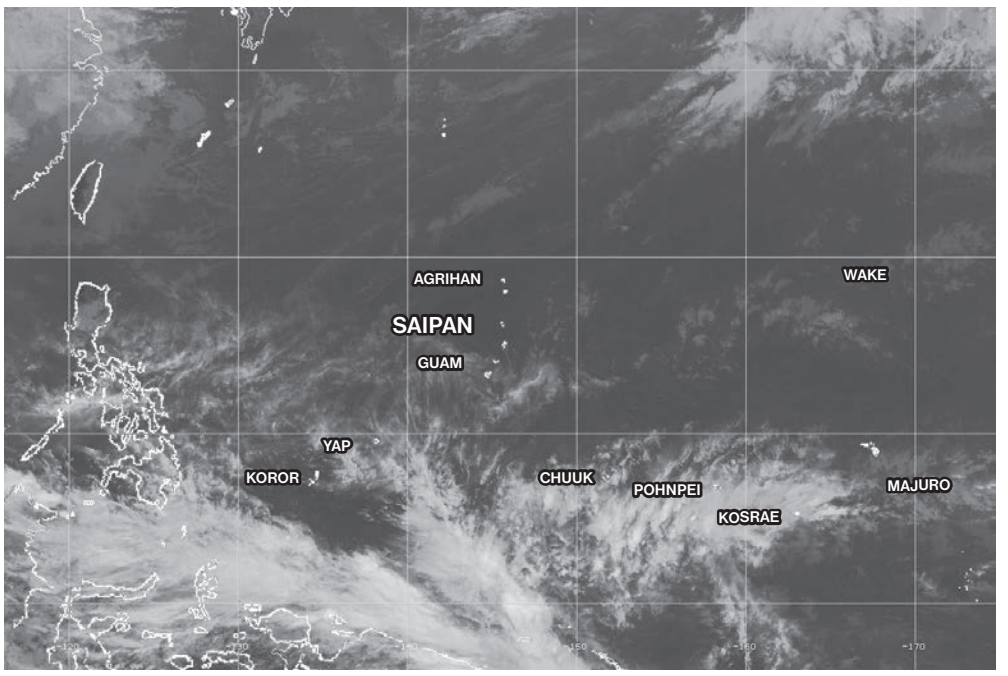
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Scattered showers. Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Partly sunny
86º 76º	86º 76º	87º 77º	87º 77º	87º 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:48 AM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate trades prevail in the Marianas. Satellite imagery and Doppler radar indicate just thinly dispersed low level clouds across the region. Buoys indicate near 7-foot seas.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Isolated Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Palau	Scattered Thunderstorms	82° / 76°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Cloudy	85° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:44 AM	6:18 PM
Friday	6:43 AM	6:18 PM
Saturday	6:43 AM	6:19 PM
Sunday	6:43 AM	6:19 PM
Monday	6:42 AM	6:19 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	8:53 AM	9:06 PM
Friday	-	9:28 AM	9:54 PM
Saturday	-	10:03 AM	10:43 PM
Sunday	-	10:40 AM	11:35 PM
Monday	-	11:20 AM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	72° / 60°
Beijing	Snow Showers	35° / 23°
Hong Kong	Cloudy	70° / 67°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy/Wind	79° / 72°
London	Partly Cloudy	48° / 32°
Los Angeles	Sunny	73° / 49°
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 77°
Melbourne	Thunderstorms	79° / 57°
Miami	Showers	80° / 72°
New York	Sunny	48° / 37°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	55° / 41°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	41° / 34°
Busan	Cloudy	53° / 44°
Rome	Showers	55° / 37°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	70° / 54°
San Francisco	Sunny	61° / 42°
Seoul	Cloudy	50° / 34°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	51° / 35°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	62° / 41°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:47 AM	Low Tide	-0.07
10:23 AM	High Tide	1.67
4:23 PM	Low Tide	0.74
9:32 PM	High Tide	1.55

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
TW9308	3:50AM	7:20AM	1, 4, 5, 7
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	9:20PM	2:50AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.	

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.	

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Payless says no to single-use plastic bags

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MARK RABAGO

Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store in Chalan Kanoa no longer carries single-use plastic bags starting last Jan. 1.

Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store is giving Mother Nature a solid after deciding at the start of the year to completely remove single-use plastic bags.

General manager Jay Santos said Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store's decision to ditch single-use plastic bags was a conscious effort and came down from the top brass of Triple J. Enterprises, Inc.

"It's our way of getting greener and helping the environment. We're such a small island and it's always a sad sight to see plastic bags proliferating everywhere," he said.

In lieu of single-use plastic bags, the Chalan Kanoa store is making available brown paper bags and reusable bags made from durable biodegradable materials as substitutes at a minimum cost to customers.

Santos said Triple J and Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store could no longer wait for local legislation to compel businesses like them to switch from single-use plastic bags to more greener alternatives, adding that if Palau and Guam can do it, so can the CNMI.

Store retail manager Alex Camacho said he's glad that Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store got rid of single-use plastic bags.

"We're just trying to promote saving the environment because right now when you go to the beach every weekend you see all these plastics lying around. We need to protect our fish and other wildlife on the beach."

He added that SuperFresh & Truckload Store is the first on island to do this and it's been a real struggle to push it to customers, but they do try to educate them that in the long run it's better for the environment.

Camacho said since outlawing the use of single-use plastic bags at the start of the year, the only plastic bags they've been using inside the store are the small cellophane-like ones used for produce and meats to prevent cross contamination.

Staff Fatima Monterubio echoed Camacho when she said customers at first were shocked when they learned that they don't use single-use plastic bags anymore.

"They usually ask us 'why are we doing this?' But after explaining to them it's for the environment, they usually come to understand," she said.

SuperFresh & Truckload Store sells the big reusable picnic bags made of disposable material for $6.99, the blue reusable bags for 99 cents, and the brown paper bags for 25 cents and 10 cents for the big and small sizes, respectively.

In 2019, the Plastic Bag Bill, or Senate Bill 21-37, was introduced in the Senate. It seeks to prohibit the importation and production of single-use plastic bags in the CNMI four months after its enactment, and would bar businesses from providing single-use plastic checkout bags a year after its enactment.

Two years later in 2021, House Bill 22-56 or the Eco-Friendly Act of 2021 was introduced in the House of Representatives. Under the bill, a $1 plastic bag fee was proposed for those not using a reusable bag in their trips to grocery stores. Both bills were never enacted.

MARK RABAGO

Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store retail manager Alex Camacho, left, poses with staff while showing off brown paper bags and reusable bags made from durable biodegradable materials.

FTX founder heads to court after judge rejects bail request

NEW YORK (AP)—FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried will head to a New York courtroom Thursday to face a federal judge who said his effort to contact a likely trial witness against him seemed designed so they would "sing out of the same hymn book."

On Tuesday, Judge Lewis A. Kaplan rejected Bankman's-Fried's lawyers' request that oral arguments about his bail be cancelled because lawyers on both sides have settled their differences on necessary changes to his bail package in order to prevent inappropriate contact with witnesses or damaging encrypted social media communications.

The arguments, set for Thursday morning, will proceed as scheduled, the judge ruled as he declined to immediately approve new bail conditions that defense lawyers said prosecutors had agreed with, including the exemption of certain individuals from a proposed no-contact list and permission for Bankman-Fried to place audio and video calls.

A spokesperson for Bankman-Fried's attorneys declined to comment.

The hearing was scheduled after prosecutors said Bankman-Fried sent an encrypted message over the Signal texting app on Jan. 15 to the general counsel of FTX US.

"I would really love to reconnect and see if there's a way for us to have a constructive relationship, use each other as resources when possible, or at least vet things with each other. I'd love to get on a phone call sometime soon and chat," Bankman-Fried wrote to the FTX general counsel, who isn't named but is dubbed "Witness 1," in the prosecutors' letter.

Federal prosecutors told Kaplan that Bankman-Fried's communications indicate he may be trying to influence a witness with incriminating evidence against him.

Last week, Kaplan wrote that Bankman's-Fried's lawyers appealed to him to interpret the message "in a benign way." But he said their argument was not persuasive.

"In perhaps more colloquial terms, it appears to have been an effort to have both the defendant and Witness 1 sing out of the same hymn book," Kaplan said.

The judge said a possible motive was evident from the fact that the general counsel was undisputedly a witness to some events likely to be at issue in the case and Bankman-Fried faces the possibility of a long prison term if he is convicted.

Kaplan said the question of whether further measures should be taken to restrict Bankman-Fried's actions was also raised by allegations that he directed employees in the past to use applications whose communications could be erased and because he had invited a telephonic rather than written response from the general counsel.

The judge said he must decide whether further measures should be imposed to assure the safety of the community from efforts by Bankman-Fried to influence or tamper with prospective witnesses.

Bankman-Fried, 30, has been confined with electronic monitoring to his parents' home in Palo Alto, California, since his December arrest on charges that he cheated investors and that he looted customer deposits on his cryptocurrency trading platform, in part to finance political donations and make risky trades at Alameda Research.

He has pleaded not guilty. A trial has been tentatively set for early October.

IRS urges special refund recipients to delay filing taxes

NEW YORK (AP)—The Internal Revenue Service is recommending that taxpayers hold off on filing their tax returns for 2022 if they received a special tax refund or payment from their state last year.

Last year, 19 states offered diverse programs that offered inflation relief payments or refunds for taxpayers. The IRS issued the guidance Friday due to the agency's uncertainty about the taxability of the payments.

"We are working with state tax officials as quickly as possible to provide additional information and clarity for taxpayers," the IRS said in its statement.

For residents from states such as California and Illinois, the agency is recommending that they hold off on filing their tax returns until they receive further instruction from the IRS.

If you received a state tax refund last year, here is what you need to know.

I GOT A TAX REFUND FROM MY STATE. WHAT DOES THE IRS STATEMENT MEAN FOR ME?

If you got a tax refund from your state in 2022, the IRS is recommending you hold off on filing your tax return until the agency gives further instructions. Certain states that provided these refunds have determined that these payments are not taxable for most people. What needs to be determined is if these refunds are taxable on the federal level, said Tom O'Saben, director of tax content and government relations at the National Association of Tax Professionals.

In some states, people would get taxed if they received a tax refund in 2022 only if they itemize their deductions, said Keith Hall, president and CEO of the National Association for the Self-Employed. An example of a state that is taking this route is Virginia, which has stated that taxpayers that filed a standard deduction will not be taxed for their tax rebate. However, not all states have issued guidance on tax rebates.

WHY SHOULD I WAIT TO FILE MY RETURN?

Following the IRS recommendations is key if taxpayers want to avoid having to amend a previously filed tax return, said Hall.

"I think the IRS is trying to help people save another filing, if they had to do an amended return," he said.

I RECEIVED A REFUND AND ALREADY FILED MY TAXES. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

The IRS is recommending that you don't file an amended return yet. If you believe you need to file an amended return, the IRS advises you to wait until further instructions are given.

Nation

Biden in State of Union exhorts Congress: 'Finish the job'

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden exhorted Congress Tuesday night to work with him to "finish the job" of rebuilding the economy and uniting the nation as he delivered a State of the Union address aimed at reassuring a country beset by pessimism and fraught political divisions.

In his 73-minute speech, Biden sought to portray a nation dramatically improved from the one he took charge of two years ago: from a reeling economy to one prosperous with new jobs; from a crippled, pandemic-weary nation to one that has now reopened, and a democracy that has survived its biggest test since the Civil War.

"The story of America is a story of progress and resilience. Of always moving forward. Of never giving up," Biden said. "We are the only country that has emerged from every crisis stronger than when we entered it. That is what we are doing again."

"We're not finished yet by any stretch of the imagination," he declared.

The backdrop for the annual address was markedly different from the previous two years, with a Republican speaker now sitting expressionless behind Biden and newly empowered GOP lawmakers in the chamber sometimes shouting criticism of him and his administration.

As Biden, 80, prepares for a likely reelection bid, he sought to prove to a skeptical nation that his stewardship has delivered results both at home and abroad. He highlighted record job creation during his tenure as the country has emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, and pointed to areas of bipartisan progress in his first two years in office, including

AP

President Joe Biden delivers the State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress at the U.S. Capitol, Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023, in Washington, as Vice President Kamala Harris and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy of Calif., applaud.

on states' vital infrastructure projects and high tech manufacturing. And he said, "There is no reason we can't work together in this new Congress."

"The people sent us a clear message. Fighting for the sake of fighting, power for the sake of power, conflict for the sake of conflict, gets us nowhere," Biden said. "And that's always been my vision for the country: to restore the soul of the nation, to rebuild the backbone of America—the middle class—to unite the country."

"We've been sent here to finish the job!"

But the challenges for Biden are many: economic uncertainty, a wearying war in Ukraine, growing tensions with China and more. Signs of past trauma at the Capitol, most notably the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection, were unavoidable: A large fence encircled the complex, and lawmakers and those in attendance faced tighter-than-usual security.

From the start, the heightened partisan divisions were clear. Democrats—including Vice President Kamala Harris—jumped to applause as Biden began his speech. New Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, though he had greeted the president warmly when he entered the chamber, stayed in his seat.

The speech came as Biden has shifted his sights after spending his first two years pushing through major bills such as the bipartisan infrastructure package, legislation to promote high-tech manufacturing and climate measures. With Republicans now in control of the House, and even meeting the government's fiscal obligations far from certain, Biden is turning his focus to implementing those massive laws and making sure voters credit him for the improvements.

Instead of flashy proposals, the president offered an encouraging assessment of the nation's condition, declaring that two years after the Capitol attack, America's democracy was "unbowed and unbroken."

The president took to the House rostrum at a time when just a quarter of U.S. adults say things are headed in the right direction, according to a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. About three-quarters say things are on the wrong track. And a majority of Democrats don't want Biden to seek another term.

He sought to confront those sentiments head-on.

"You wonder whether a path even exists anymore for you and your children to get ahead without moving away, I get it," Biden said. "That's why we're building an economy where no one is left behind. Jobs are coming back, pride is coming back because of the choices we made in the last two years."

Toll of police brutality on display at State of the Union

WASHINGTON (AP)—The toll of police brutality in America was on painful display Tuesday night as family members of Black men and women killed in custody joined lawmakers in the Capitol to hear President Joe Biden's State of the Union address.

Seated near first lady Jill Biden were the mother and father of Tyre Nichols, who died after being savagely beaten by Memphis, Tennessee, police officers last month.

"There are no words to describe the heartbreak and grief of losing a child," Biden said after introducing RowVaughn and Rodney Wells to a standing ovation. "But imagine what it's like to lose a child at the hands of the law."

The president described the difficult conversation Black parents have to have with their kids about police at a young age.

"Most of us here have never had to have 'the talk,'" Biden said. "Let's come together and finish the job on police reform."

Mothers, fathers and loved ones of victims of police violence were invited as guests of the Congressional Black Caucus and the first lady to put pressure on Washington to address the issue of policing.

"It may have been Tyre Nichols yesterday, but it could be any one of us today and tomorrow," Rep. Steven Horsford, D-Nev., the chairman of the Black Caucus, said of the most recent victim during a news conference Tuesday morning.

A video released earlier this month showed the violent Jan. 7 encounter between Nichols and the Memphis, Tennessee, police officers who beat the 29-year-old Black FedEx worker for three minutes while screaming profanities at him. Nichols was hospitalized and died days later. Five police officers, who also are Black, have been fired and charged with second-degree murder and two more have been disciplined.

Days after the release of the video, Horsford reached out to Nichols' parents, RowVaughn and Rodney Wells, to invite them to the State of the Union address. The Nevada Democrat said it was important that the couple witnessed the president's speech as he laid out the important issues facing Americans.

"Being in the room for the State of the Union is an experience that I hope will give Tyre Nichols' parents some comfort and, most of all, hope," Horsford said. "They deserve to hear a commitment to real action on ending this national scourge of unnecessary deaths at the hands of law enforcement."

Also in attendance, Tuesday night were the mother of Eric Garner and the brother of George Floyd, among others.

The visible reminder of police brutality comes against the backdrop of reignited negotiations among lawmakers to draft a modest proposal for police reform that could pass in a newly GOP-controlled House.

Memphis officer took, shared photos of bloodied Tyre Nichols

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Documents released Tuesday provided a scathing account of what authorities called the "blatantly unprofessional" conduct of five officers involved in the fatal police beating of Tyre Nichols during a traffic stop last month—including new revelations about how one officer took and shared pictures of the bloodied victim.

The officer, Demetrius Haley, stood over Nichols as he lay propped against a police car and took photographs, which Haley sent to other officers and a female acquaintance, according to documents released by the Tennessee Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission.

"Your on-duty conduct was unjustly, blatantly unprofessional and unbecoming for a sworn public servant," the Memphis Police Department wrote in requesting that Haley and the other officers be decertified.

Haley's lawyer declined to comment, and lawyers for the other four officers either declined to comment or did not respond to requests from The Associated Press.

The five officers—Haley, Desmond Mills Jr., Tadarrius Bean, Justin Smith and Emmitt Martin III—have all been fired and charged with second-degree murder. The new documents offer the most detailed account to date of each officer's actions.

Another officer has also been fired and a seventh has been relieved of duty in connection with the latest police killing to prompt angry nationwide protests and an intense public conversation about how police officers treat Black residents.

As many as 13 Memphis officers could end up being disciplined, officials said Tuesday.

The newly released documents are part of a request by the Memphis Police Department that the five officers who have been charged with murder be decertified and prohibited from working in law enforcement again. Memphis Police Chief Cerelyn "CJ" Davis signed each of the five requests to decertify the officers.

Haley, who was driving an unmarked car and wore a black sweatshirt hoodie over his head, forced Nichols from his car using loud profanity, then sprayed him directly in the eyes with a chemical irritant spray, according to the statement.

"You never told the driver the purpose of the vehicle stop or that he was under arrest," it states.

Haley did not have his body camera on when he stopped Nichols but was on a phone call with someone who overheard the encounter.

Nichols ran from the officers but was apprehended again a few blocks away. At that point, Haley kicked him in the torso as three other officers were handcuffing him. Other officers kicked Nichols in the face, punched him or struck him with a baton. According to footage captured on a utility pole camera, one of the officers appears to quickly take a photo of Nichols on his phone as flashlights are shined on him.

"You and other officers were captured on body worn camera making multiple unprofessional comments, laughing, bragging about your involvement," the decertification charges against Mills said.

They added, "You admitted you did not provide immediate medical aid and walked away and decontaminated yourself from chemical irritant spray," and further accused Mills of later failing to give Nichols' mother an accurate account of what happened.

Martin claimed Nichols tried to snatch the officer's gun from his holster after another officer forced him out of the vehicle, with Martin helping by grabbing Nichols' wrist. However, video evidence doesn't corroborate the gun-grab claim, the documents said.

Audio from a body camera did not capture Nichols using profanity or making violent threats—instead, he appeared calm and polite in his comments to the officers. Martin, meanwhile, cussed at Nichols and threatened to knock him out as he commanded Nichols to put his arm behind his back.

Asia

ASIAN BRIEFS

North Korean troops encouraged by Kim Jong Un, his daughter

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un lauded the "irresistible might" of his nuclear-armed military as he visited troops with his daughter to mark the 75th founding anniversary of his army, state media said Wednesday. The visit came amid indications North Korea is preparing to stage a massive military parade in capital Pyongyang where it could showcase the latest hardware of a growing nuclear weapons program that stokes the concern of its neighbors and the United States. North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said Kim visited the lodging quarters of the Korean People's Army's general officers with his daughter, Kim Ju Ae. He later gave an encouraging speech to troops at a banquet, praising them for maintaining the "strongest army in the world" despite external difficulties. The visit came a day after Kim presided over a meeting with his top military brass and called for an expansion of combat exercises aimed at sharpening war readiness, as he looks to escalate an already provocative run in weapons demonstrations in the face of deepening tensions with his neighbors and Washington. State media photos showed military officials applauding at the banquet, which appeared to be held at Pyongyang's Yanggakdo Hotel. Kim and his daughter, believed to be 9 or 10 years old, dressed alike in black suits and white dress shirts and held hands as they walked down a red carpet alongside Kim's wife, Ri Sol Ju.

Separatist rebels take New Zealand pilot hostage in Papua

JAYAPURA, Indonesia (AP)— Separatist rebels set fire to a small plane carrying six people after it landed at a remote airport in Indonesia's restive Papua province and took its pilot, a New Zealand citizen, hostage early Tuesday, police and rebels said. Rebel spokesperson Sebby Sambom said independence fighters from the West Papua Liberation Army, the military wing of the Free Papua Organization, stormed the plane shortly after it landed in Paro in Nduga, a mountainous district. Sambom said the fighters, led by group commander Egianus Kogeya, set fire to the plane and seized its pilot, Philip Mark Mehrtens, as part of their struggle for independence. He said all five passengers, including a young child, were released because they are indigenous Papuans. "We have taken the pilot hostage and we are bringing him out," Sambom said in a statement. "We will never release the pilot we are holding hostage unless Indonesia recognizes and frees Papua from Indonesian colonialism." Sambom said the pilot is alive but did not provide his location. He said the pilot is being held because New Zealand, along with Australia and the United States, cooperate militarily with Indonesia. "New Zealand, Australia and America must be held accountable for what they have done, helping the Indonesian military to kill and genocide indigenous Papuans in the past 60 years," Sambom said.

Japan shows tough new security moves during Philippines trip

TOKYO (AP)—Growing worry over Chinese threats has led to a major Japanese boost in military spending, defense partnerships and aid packages, a concerted new effort to draw like-minded Asian nations into a stronger, unified front as Beijing seeks to establish regional dominance. This security shift will be highlighted during a visit to Tokyo starting Wednesday of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines, a mutual U.S. ally that Japan has increasingly developed defense ties with in recent years. Japan says the aggressive new policy is needed to confront China, but critics call it an attempt to use massive aid infusions to push Japanese security views on poorer countries. Marcos' visit comes just days after he and U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin agreed to allow U.S. troops access to four more bases in the Southeast Asian nation as they seek to deter China. More U.S. troops stationed at Philippine military camps would allow Washington to keep in check China's territorial ambitions in the disputed South China Sea and against self-governing Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its territory that must be brought under its control, by force if necessary. Japan is looking to deepen cooperation with the Philippines and Washington, with a focus on a possible conflict over Taiwan. An existing partnership among Tokyo, Seoul and Washington primarily deals with North Korea's missile and nuclear threats. During Marcos' Tokyo visit, Japanese and Filipino defense officials expect to sign an agreement that would allow Japanese forces to provide more training and humanitarian and disaster assistance to the Philippines.

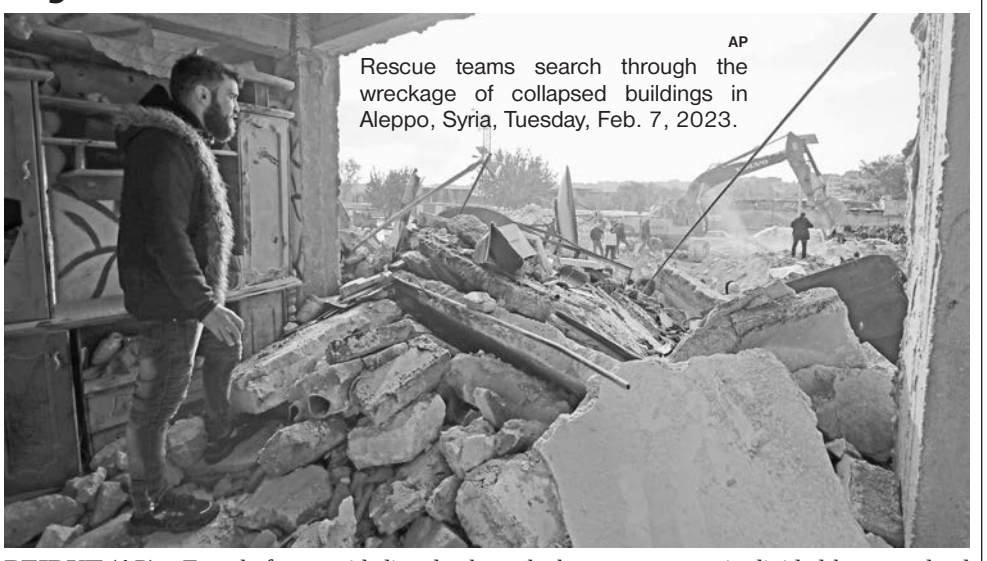
Wikipedia again up and running as Pakistan lifts ban on site

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan lifted its ban on Wikipedia services before dawn Tuesday, after the country's media regulator blocked the site last week for not removing purportedly blasphemous content, claiming it hurts the sentiments of Muslims. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif ordered the unblocking late on Monday, according to a government statement. The site was blocked on Friday by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, after a deadline expired that Pakistan gave to Wikipedia to remove the controversial content.

The ban drew criticism and many condemned Islamabad's action, saying it was a blow to digital rights and deprived the public of the right to seek knowledge. As anger grew, Pakistan's Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Monday that Sharif's five-member committee had looked into the matter and ordered Wikipedia services be restored immediately. The government has not provided any explanation or details about the content it deemed anti-Islam, and the media regulator never explained what content was purportedly hurting Muslim sentiments in Pakistan. Under Pakistan's controversial blasphemy laws, anyone found guilty of insulting Islam or its figures can be sentenced to death, although the country has yet to carry out capital punishment for blasphemy. But even allegations of the offense are often enough to provoke mob violence and even deadly attacks. International and domestic rights groups say that accusations of blasphemy have often been used to intimidate religious minorities and settle personal scores.The Wikimedia Foundation welcomed the lifting of the ban. Its statement said the lifting of the ban "means that the people of Pakistan can continue to benefit from and participate" in the growth of a global movement "to spread and share knowledge that is verified, reliable and free."

World

Aid to quake-hit Syria slowed by sanctions, war's divisions



AP

Rescue teams search through the wreckage of collapsed buildings in Aleppo, Syria, Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023.

BEIRUT (AP)—Even before Monday's devastating earthquake, getting aid to all parts of war-battered Syria was fraught with daunting political and logistical challenges.

Those hurdles have only multiplied in the wake of the disaster that has killed thousands in Turkey and Syria and brought down thousands of buildings.

Damage to roads and other infrastructure in southern Turkey has stalled aid from reaching northern Syria, an area already devastated by 12 years of conflict.

Meanwhile, the government of Bashar Assad in Damascus is still a pariah in much of the international community, sanctioned by the U.S. and European countries, which are reluctant to route aid directly through the government. American and EU officials have made clear the quake won't change that.

Emergency workers say delays could cost lives, as local rescue crews struggle to pull families and children from the rubble and find housing for survivors amid brutal winter weather.

A key issue complicating the dispersal of aid is "the war and the way the aid response is split between rebel areas and Damascus," said Aron Lund, a fellow with New York-based think tank Century International who researches Syria.

While the majority of Syria is under the control of the government in Damascus, most of the north is controlled by different—and sometimes conflicting—groups. The northwest is divided between land de facto controlled by Turkey and by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, a rebel group with ties to al-Qaida. Syria's northeast is mostly held by U.S.-backed Kurdish-led groups.

Foreign aid for years has been brought into northwestern Idlib province by way of Turkey, because of the difficulty of going by way of Damascus. But the area of southern Turkey traditionally used as a staging area has itself been heavily damaged by the earthquake.

Aid delivery into northwestern Syria was "temporarily disrupted" Tuesday, a United Nations spokesperson told The Associated Press, due to infrastructure damage and difficulty with road access.

Germany, Denmark, Netherlands pledge Ukraine Leopard 1 tanks

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands announced Tuesday that they plan to provide Ukraine with at least 100 refurbished Leopard 1 battle tanks in the coming months, a pledge that comes as Kyiv anticipates a new Russian offensive around the anniversary of its invasion.

The announcement followed Germany agreeing last month to allow deliveries of the more modern German-made Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine.

In a joint statement, the defense ministers of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands said the shipment of the older Leopard 1 tanks was part of an effort "to support Ukraine in their endeavor to withstand Russian aggression."

"(It) will significantly enhance Ukraine's military potential for the restoration of their violated territorial integrity," they said, adding that the delivery would occur "within the coming months" and include logistical support and training.

Ukrainian officials say they expect Russian forces to make a new drive in eastern and southern Ukraine, as the Kremlin strives to secure territory it illegally annexed in late September and where it claims its rule is welcomed.

The anticipated Russian push may seek to recapture territory Moscow lost in a late summer counteroffensive. Battlefield setbacks in Ukraine have embarrassed the Kremlin, and Russian President Vladimir Putin is keen to cement public support for the war.

Some Western military analysts were skeptical, however, of Russia's ability to mount a large new offensive in coming weeks, particularly in time for the Feb. 24 anniversary, that might alter the course of the war. Ukraine and Russia are both still training their new troops and amassing weapons.

News agency dpa quoted Germany's defense minister, Boris Pistorius, as saying during a visit to Kyiv on Tuesday that the first 20-25 Leopard 1 tanks would reach Ukraine this summer.

Pistorius' office said German authorities have authorized the export of up to 178 Leopard 1 A5 tanks to Ukraine, but noted that the actual number sent would depend on the refurbishments required.

The three countries that made the pledge said Belgium has also shown interest in participating in the initiative.

The Leopard 1, manufactured between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s, was the first battle tank built for West Germany's Bundeswehr. The German military hasn't had any of the tanks since 2003.

Germany last month agreed to send 14 newer Leopard 2 A6 tanks from its military's current stocks. The country's Defense Ministry said Tuesday that the first Leopard 2s could arrive in Ukraine by the end of March. The first Ukrainian soldiers to be trained on the tanks departed for Germany this week.

Environment

Study: 15 million people live under threat of glacial floods

AP

Chunks of ice break off the Perito Moreno Glacier, in Lake Argentina, at Los Glaciares National Park, near El Calafate, in Argentina's Patagonia region, March 10, 2016.

By SETH BORENSTEIN
AP SCIENCE WRITER

As glaciers melt and pour massive amounts of water into nearby lakes, 15 million people across the globe live under the threat of a sudden and deadly outburst flood, a new study finds.

More than half of those living in the shadow of the disaster called glacial lake outburst floods are in just four countries: India, Pakistan, Peru and China, according to a study in Tuesday's Nature Communications. A second study, awaiting publication in a peer-reviewed journal, catalogs more than 150 glacial flood outbursts in history and recent times.

It's a threat Americans and Europeans rarely think about, but 1 million people live within just 6 miles (10 kilometers) of potentially unstable glacial-fed lakes, the study calculated.

One of the more devastating floods was in Peru in 1941 and it killed between 1,800 and 6,000 people. A 2020 glacial lake outburst flood in British Columbia, Canada, caused a tsunami of water about 330 feet (100 meters) high, but no one was hurt. A 2017 glacial outburst flood in Nepal, triggered by a landslide, was captured on video by German climbers. Alaska's Mendenhall glacier has had annual small glacial outburst floods in what the National Weather Service calls "suicide basin," since 2011, according to study lead author Caroline Taylor, a researcher at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom.

Heavy rains and a glacial lake outburst flood combined in 2013 in India to kill thousands of people. A 2021 deadly flood in India that was initially attributed to a glacial lake outburst wasn't caused by one, studies later found.

Scientists say so far it doesn't seem like climate change has made those floods more frequent, but as glaciers shrink with warming, the amount of water in the lakes grows, making them more dangerous in those rare situations when dams burst.

"We had glacier lake outburst floods in the past that have killed many many thousands of people in a single catastrophic flooding event," said study co-author Tom Robinson, a disaster risk scientist at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. "And with climate change glaciers are melting so these lakes are getting bigger, potentially getting more unstable."

Dan Shugar, a geoscientist at the University of Calgary who wasn't part of the two studies, said much of the threat depends simply on how many people live in a glacial flood zone.

ENVIRONMENT BRIEFS

Legal sizes for lobsters could change to protect population

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)—The rules about the minimum and maximum sizes of lobsters that can be trapped off New England could soon become stricter, potentially bringing big changes to one of the most valuable seafood industries in the country. Fishers are required to measure lobsters from eyes to tail and must throw back the crustaceans if they're too large or too small. The rules, which can vary slightly based on fishing grounds, are intended to maintain a breeding population of the lobsters in key areas such as the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank. The regulatory Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is considering changing the standards by a fraction of an inch in some of the fishing grounds. The commission said it's considering the changes because of a worrisome lack of baby lobsters growing off New England. The changes would arrive at a time when the lobster industry is experiencing record highs in both catch and value, and consumers are paying more for lobsters—already a premium product—than they were just a few years ago. The industry is also challenged by warming oceans and new fishing rules designed to protect rare whales. Recent surveys that show declining levels of young lobsters are a concern for the future of the fishery, said Caitlin Starks, senior fishery management plan coordinator for the commission.

New Indian Ocean fishing rules in big win for coastal states

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP)—Indian Ocean states agreed Monday to temporarily halt the use of industrial fishing gear that is drastically depleting tuna stocks in a win for countries that rely on smaller-scale fishing methods to prop up the livelihoods of communities across coastal regions. The decision comes after three days of turbulent negotiations at the meeting of the 30-member Indian Ocean Tuna Commission in Mombasa, Kenya, where developing nations were at odds with the European Union, whose member states rely more heavily on purse seiners and long liners which are more destructive to the marine environment. The new resolution "may finally give room to yellowfin and bigeye populations to rebuild," said Frédéric Le Manach, the Scientific Director of the French ocean conservation group Bloom. The new rules on tuna fisheries were nearly thwarted over the weekend when Kenya's fisheries minister pulled support for the proposal, with some observers saying the change of heart may have been down to EU pressure. But 11 other states, led by the Indonesian delegation, pushed the resolution through. "The persistence shown by all the proponents proves that unity can bring movement to a better direction for the conservation and management of tuna fisheries in the Indian Ocean," Putuh Suadela, the head of the Indonesian delegation, told The Associated Press. Maldivian fisheries expert Hussain Sinan said the new rules introduced by coastal states are "monumental" and will redefine local marine management in the region.

In Spain, storks' trash diet driven by climate change

COLMENAR VIEJO, Spain (AP)—The storks float and swoop in formation, circling over a landfill in the foothills of the Sierra de Guadarrama mountains north of Madrid. Then a garbage truck pulls up and disgorges its contents. One by one, they dive to the ground: breakfast is here. Europe's storks used to fly south to Africa's Sahel region to spend the winter, stopping off in Spain along the way. But with higher temperatures driven by human-caused climate change and abundant food available at open-air waste disposal sites, most adult storks no longer make the long and exhausting journey. At Madrid's Colmenar Viejo landfill, around 100 trucks a day dump household waste into a crater that is then covered with sand by diggers. Hundreds of white storks have built nests up to six feet long on roofs and in the bell tower of the nearby church. There are even nests on streetlights. "This is a stork paradise because they have grass, pastures and then the landfill, so they have it all here," said Alejandro López García, who is studying Madrid's stork population for his PhD at Madrid's Complutense University. Researchers found 36,217 of Europe's approximately 450,000 white storks in Spain in fall 2020, accordingto a census. That makes it the most popular host country for this breed on the continent, along with Poland.

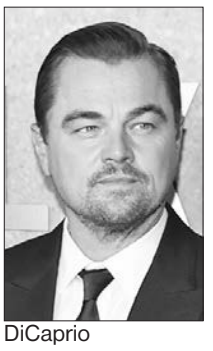
Life & Style

Leonardo DiCaprio denies he's dating a model as young as 19

By MARTHA ROSS
THE MERCURY NEWS

Twitter's been in an uproar over rumors that DiCaprio—famous for never dating a woman older than 25—was spending time with a 19-year-old whose high school education would have been interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic

After people across social media slammed Leonardo DiCaprio for supposedly taking his penchant for pretty, young models too far by dating a 19-year-old, a source close to the 48-year-old actor has come forward to deny such rumors.


DiCaprio

No, DiCaprio's source told TMZ Tuesday, the actor is not dating Paris-born model Eden Polani. Rumors began to spread that DiCaprio had turned his attention from 23-year-old Victoria Lamas, his latest reported girlfriend, to the even younger Polani. The rumors erupted after the Oscar winner was seated next to Polani at singer Ebony Riley's release party for her new EP on Jan. 31, TMZ said. Lamas was nowhere to be seen.

While DiCaprio's relationship history shows that he's never been known to date a woman older than 25, people on Twitter expressed horror that the actor would date someone as young as 19, the Daily Mail reported. People noted that she's young enough to have had her high school education interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and to be born after DiCaprio became a movie heartthrob when he starred in the 1997 film "Titanic."

But the rep for DiCaprio made it clear to TMZ: Just because DiCaprio might be seen talking to or sitting next to a young woman doesn't mean he's dating her.

Over the past few months, DiCaprio has been seen in the company of plenty of attractive young women since he ended his four-year relationship with model and actor Camila Morrone. That relationship ended in August—around the time that Morrone turned 25.

3 men missing after canceled rap gig were fatally shot

HIGHLAND PARK, Mich. (AP)—Three men who disappeared after planning to rap at a Detroit party were killed by multiple gunshots, police said Tuesday, five days after their bodies were found in a vacant, rat-infested building.

"The investigation also has revealed that this was not a random incident," state police said on Twitter. "The investigation is continuing and detectives are making progress and we believe we may have determined a motive."

The victims were Armani Kelly, 27, of Oscoda; Montoya Givens, 31, of Detroit; and Dante Wicker, 31, of Melvindale.

The bodies were found Feb. 2 in Highland Park, near Detroit, nearly two weeks after the men were last seen. At least two of them were supposed to rap on Jan. 21 at a club called Lounge 31, but the event was canceled.

"It has been determined that the cause of death for each of the men was multiple gunshot wounds," state police said.

Kelly, Givens and Wicker met while in prison. Kelly and Givens were on parole at the time of their disappearance, according to the state Corrections Department.

Tickets for Beyoncé's 1st concert of world tour sell out

STOCKHOLM (AP)—Tickets for the first concert of Beyoncé's upcoming "Renaissance" world tour sold out Tuesday, and concert management group Live Nation said a second concert in Stockholm was added because of the high demand.

Beyonce

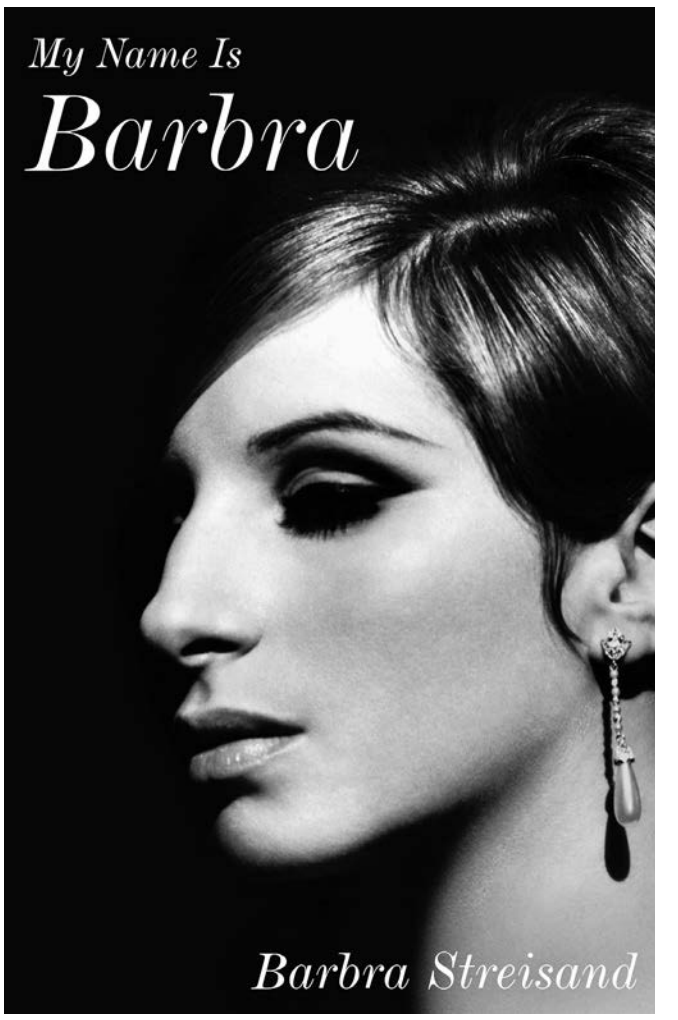
The tour starts in Sweden in May and is scheduled to include stops in London, Paris, Barcelona, Toronto and the United States. The last expected concert is set for Sept. 27 in New Orleans.

No details were given on how quickly the R&B superstar's fans snapped up all the tickets for her May 10 Stockholm show. Tickets are set to go on sale Wednesday for the second show in Sweden's capital on May 11. Beyoncé will perform both concerts at the Friends Arena, a multipurpose stadium with a retractable roof and a concert audience capacity of 65,000.

This year's performance's will be will be Beyoncé's first solo world tour since her "Formation" tour in 2016. She last appeared in Stockholm in 2018 while touring with her husband, Jay Z.

At last: Streisand memoir 'My Name is Barbra' coming Nov. 7

NEW YORK (AP)—Barbra Streisand's very long and very long-awaited memoir, a project she has talked about for years, is coming out this fall. Viking, a Penguin Random House imprint, will release "My Name is Barbra" on Nov. 7.



VIKING VIA AP
This cover image released by Viking shows "My Name is Barbra" by Barbra Streisand.

Her memoir, fitting for a superstar of the grandest ambitions, is listed at 1,040 pages.

"The book is, like Barbra herself, frank, funny, opinionated, and charming," according to the publisher. "She recounts her early struggles to become an actress, eventually turning to singing to earn a living; the recording of some of her acclaimed albums; the years of effort involved in making 'Yentl'; her direction of 'The Prince of Tides'; her friendships with figures ranging from Marlon Brando to Madeleine Albright; her political advocacy; and the fulfillment she's found in her marriage to James Brolin."

"My Name Is Barbra" also is the title of a 1965 Streisand album and television special.

Publishers have sought a Streisand memoir for decades, with the singer telling Jimmy Fallon in 2021 that Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis asked her to write one in the early 1980s, when the former first lady was an editor at Doubleday. During an Associated Press interview in 2009, Streisand mentioned that she had been writing chapters about her life, in longhand.

"I go back and forth," Streisand said at the time. "Do I really want to write about my life? Do I really want to relive my life? I'm not sure."

The memoir was first announced in 2015, and scheduled for two years later, although it didn't have a title at the time. A reference to it on her web site, posted in 2015, was later pulled.

Wife holds veto power in couple's major decisions

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I have been married for 37 years. We have a fairly good marriage. However, when it comes to communication, there's a lot of room for improvement. I would very much like to get a second dog. I'm home alone all day because I am on disability; I have few friends, and my social life consists of the time and attention I give my dog, "Rascal," a standard schnauzer.

We can well afford another dog; we have a big enough home, a fenced-in yard—all of the things necessary for responsible dog ownership. The problem is, if I mention the subject, my wife gets very angry and immediately dismisses the idea without any discussion.

We don't discuss issues in our home. If my wife gives her thumbs-up, then it's a go. If she gives a thumbs-down, it's no-go. I don't think there's any reason why her refusal to get another dog should trump my desire to get one. Ideally, we should be able to sit down over a meal and collegially discuss the issue and base the decision upon what we mutually agree upon. Unfortunately, no such scenario exists.

I would appreciate any help you could give me. I would very much like another dog because having them brings me much joy and needed company. I don't ask for much. I don't understand why this is an issue.

LONELY FOR MORE IN OHIO

DEAR LONELY: Your problem is twofold. One is acquiring another dog. The other is the imbalance of power in your marriage. I agree that important decisions like this should be shared, but that's not how things work between you and your wife. In your household, she has taken on the role of "alpha dog."

Unless the two of you open enough lines of communication that you can be heard, nothing will change, and you will grow increasingly unhappy. If you can afford a licensed marriage and family therapist, make an appointment to talk with one about this and any other issues you and your wife can't agree on. And I hope you are aware that you do not need her permission to get a second dog, if you are the person who will ensure it gets the love and care it needs.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: My brother-in-law is with this woman, "Jana," who has three children. They call him Dad. I've no idea where the real father is. Jana is controlling, bipolar and a drunk. She doesn't cook or clean. His mother is sick, but he doesn't visit her because of Jana. They will be married in a few months.

No one in our family liked Jana from the beginning. We have reason to believe he doesn't love her and that he's just attached to the kids. We have tried warning him, but Jana is louder, and he hears her more than he hears us. I don't think we should go to the wedding. Should we let him go through with it and attend to support him? I don't want those kids to suffer if their parents are in a miserable marriage.

OBJECTING TO IT

DEAR ABBY
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR OBJECTING: If Jana is as bad as you say, the kids are already suffering. While I agree that it may be ill-advised for your brother-in-law to marry someone with as much baggage as Jana is bringing to their union, he's an adult and you can't stop him.

Whether their marriage will last is anybody's guess based upon how much pain your BIL can tolerate. But you should definitely go to that wedding, if only to show him you are there for him on that day AND ALWAYS.

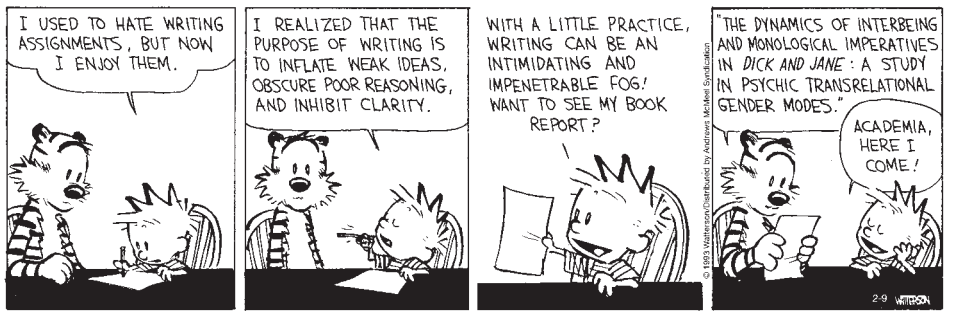
■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I USED TO HATE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS, BUT NOW I ENJOY THEM.
I REALIZED THAT THE PURPOSE OF WRITING IS TO INFLATE WEAK IDEAS, OBSCURE POOR REASONING, AND INHIBIT CLARITY.
WITH A LITTLE PRACTICE, WRITING CAN BE AN INTIMIDATING AND IMPENETRABLE FOG! WANT TO SEE MY BOOK REPORT?
"THE DYNAMICS OF INTERBEING AND MONOLOGICAL IMPERATIVES IN DICK AND JANE: A STUDY IN PSYCHIC TRANSRELATIONAL GENDER MODES."
ACADEMIA, HERE I COME!
© 1993 Watterson/Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
2-9 WATTERSON

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

LOOK! A MOURNING DOVE!
DONK!
IT HIT THE WINDOW!
LET THAT BE A LESSON TO YOU, KIDS...
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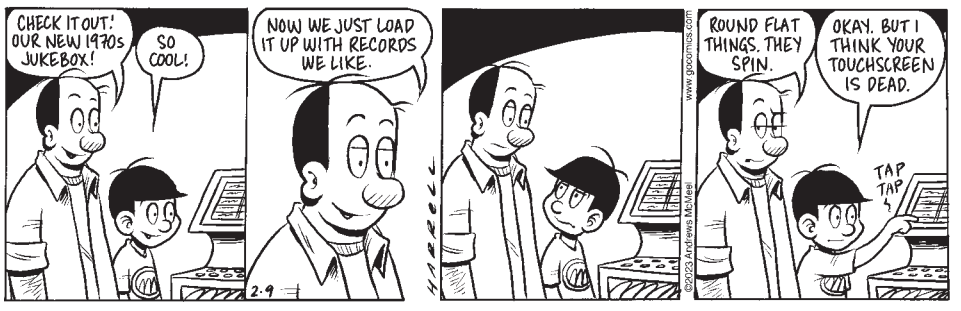
NEVER TEXT AND FLY
PING!
Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
JIM DAVIS 2-9

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


CHECK IT OUT! OUR NEW 1970s JUKEBOX!
SO COOL!
NOW WE JUST LOAD IT UP WITH RECORDS WE LIKE.
ROUND FLAT THINGS. THEY SPIN.
OKAY. BUT I THINK YOUR TOUCHSCREEN IS DEAD.
TAP TAP
www.gocomics.com
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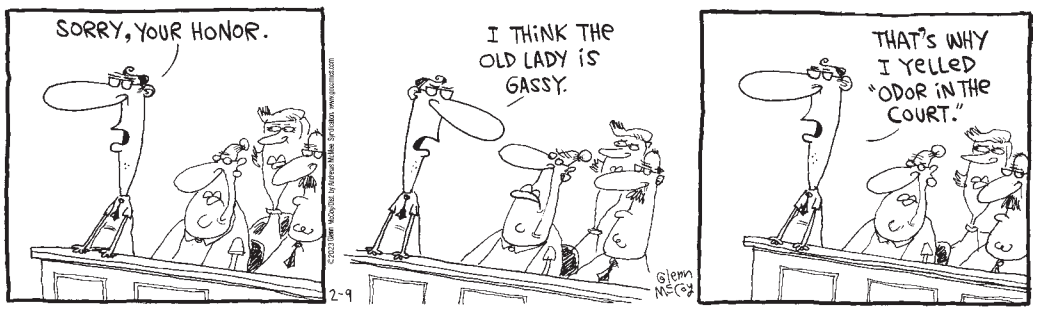
2-9

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


SORRY, YOUR HONOR.
I THINK THE OLD LADY IS GASSY.
THAT'S WHY I YELLED "ODOR IN THE COURT."
©2023 Glenn McCoy, dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication. www.gocomics.com
2-9
Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Suffix with song or gab
5 "NCIS" airer
8 Part of a French play
12 Penne — Vodka
13 Reaction at a magic show
14 Type
15 Postal delivery
16 Bathroom, to a Londoner
17 Skirt feature
18 Firstborn
20 Vow
22 Knightly address
23 Sphere
24 Pudding variety
27 San Francisco Bay attraction
32 Green prefix
33 Ultramodernist
34 Epoch
35 Old movie projector part
38 Booty
39 Tic-tac-toe win
40 Hooter
42 Bilingual Muppet
45 Kingdoms
49 Org.
50 Noon, on a clock
52 Pond duck
53 Actress Elisabeth
54 Golfer Ernie
55 Within (Pref.)
56 Go by
57 Permit
58 RSVP enclosure

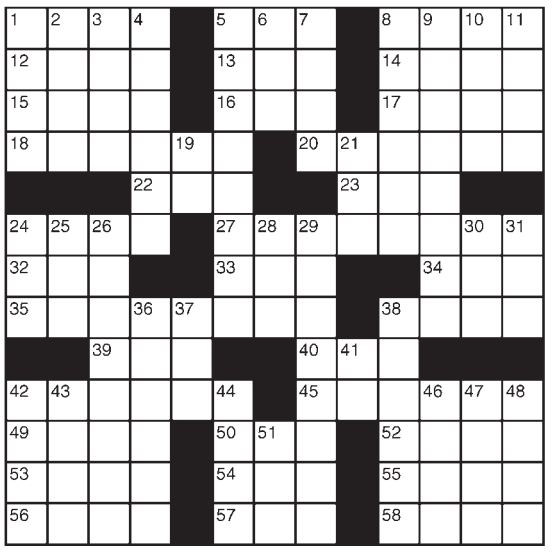
DOWN

1 Notoriety
2 Mideast airline
3 Lost traction
4 "Honor Thy Father" author
5 Jazz saxophonist John —
6 Scary shout
7 Boutique
8 Declare
9 Type of coffee
10 Advanced math
11 Diminutive suffix
19 Yes, to Juana
21 Mauna —
24 Ump
25 Here, to Henri
26 Gigantic statue
28 Author Harper
29 Salon worker
30 Notre Dame coach
31 Abrupt turn
36 Des —
37 Decay
38 Schedules
41 You and I
42 Grate
43 Jobsafety org.
44 Skater's leap
46 Sultry Horne
47 Yoga class pads
48 Tart fruit
51 Land in la mer

Solution time: 24 mins.

I	M	P	S	■	J	A	I	■	S	T	A	B
S	A	L	E	■	I	A	N	■	O	H	I	O
P	I	A	N	O	M	A	N	■	S	E	R	A
S	L	Y	E	R	■	■	S	H	A	P	E	R
■	■	■	C	E	L	T	■	M	D	I	■	■
P	U	P	A	■	O	R	E	O	■	A	D	Z
A	N	I	■	A	N	A	I	S	■	N	I	A
M	A	A	■	M	E	I	R	■	B	O	N	G
■	■	■	N	E	O	■	T	E	A	R	■	■
C	H	O	P	R	A	■	■	M	A	C	A	W
H	O	B	O	■	T	O	Y	P	I	A	N	O
I	H	A	D	■	O	L	E	■	D	R	E	W
C	O	R	E	■	M	D	S	■	S	O	W	S

Yesterday's answer 2-9



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Tyson Houseman, 33; Mia Farrow, 78; Joe Pesci, 80; Carole King, 81.

Happy Birthday: Clear up unfinished business, declutter your life and dedicate your time to the people, activities and things that bring you joy. Reevaluate your lifestyle, how and where you live, and what you can do to make your surroundings more conducive to living your dream. Positive energy will help you generate the spirit required to persuade others to help you reach your desired goal. Your numbers are 4, 15, 18, 27, 36, 43, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Choose your words wisely; a slip of the tongue will display your feelings and curb your chance of getting positive results. Strive to maintain a simple life and be peaceful. Keep your thoughts a secret until you decide your next move. Opportunity begins with you. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* An aggressive move on your part will also cause friction with someone who doesn't see things your way. Slow down, hear what others say and make decisions based on what's best for everyone. Intelligence will win in the end. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Don't let anyone lead you astray with pretenses. Build opportunities that don't require you to depend on others. Stay in control, do things your way and take credit for your accomplishments. Set high standards and live by them. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Do what feels right, and stop worrying about what others do or think. Trust in your instincts and refuse to let emotional meddling come between you and what you are trying to achieve. Leave nothing to chance; be sure to reach your deadlines. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Travel, excitement and entertainment will lead to exciting connections and opportunities. Open doors, make plans and head in a direction that makes you want to shout with pride and make a difference to something that matters to you. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Listen up; you're receiving several signals to help you pick and choose what to do next. As harsh as someone may sound, don't let anger set in, or you will miss the lesson. A change will work in your favor. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Take advantage of any opportunity to try something new. Your unique spin will draw attention and give you the money to pick and choose people with something to contribute to your side. Added discipline and the desire to win will pay off. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Step back, and you'll get a different perspective on a situation at home. Use your keen awareness and unique way of handling people to turn lemons into lemonade. A romantic gesture will encourage someone to be open with you. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Listen cautiously and interpret what you find out. When in doubt, ask questions to avoid letting someone take advantage of you or blame you for something. Focus on your home and clearing a space you can call your own. Say no to manipulative people. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Stifle your emotions and gather facts. Don't start something you can't finish. Do something to lift your spirits and make you feel good about who you are and how you can make a difference. Have faith in what you have to offer. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* If you look, you'll find a unique way to turn something into a moneymaker. Sell items you no longer need or make an item that helps ease your stress and is novel enough to market. Deals look promising, and gifts and windfalls are apparent. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Keep an open mind. Size up situations, then you'll know when to make a move. Someone's motives will be questionable. Don't be afraid to do your own thing if it keeps the peace and gives you wiggle room. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are lucky, convincing and intuitive. You are cooperative and organized.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

					5	2		
5	8		2	4		7		6
	2	4		3		8		5
				2				3
	9		6					
	6	7		8	1			4
8				9		3		
2								8
	3	6				4		

Difficulty: ★★★ 2-9

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	7	6	9	3	8	4	2	1
1	4	2	7	6	5	9	3	8
8	9	3	4	2	1	7	6	5
3	8	9	1	4	2	5	7	6
6	5	7	8	9	3	1	4	2
2	1	4	5	7	6	8	9	3
9	3	8	2	1	4	6	5	7
7	6	5	3	8	9	2	1	4
4	2	1	6	5	7	3	8	9

Difficulty: ★★★ 2-8

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

METADATA **Solution: 10 letters**

T	S	E	S	Y	G	O	L	O	N	H	C	E	T	T
I	A	T	U	P	D	A	T	E	S	H	I	N	E	I
T	V	B	O	N	O	T	O	H	P	M	A	V	D	N
L	E	I	L	R	E	S	U	A	A	V	I	E	U	F
E	V	X	D	E	A	V	R	G	E	T	N	M	N	O
N	I	H	T	E	Ⓣ	G	E	L	A	T	B	A	R	R
O	T	C	U	C	Ⓞ	E	E	R	I	E	M	R	T	M
I	P	R	E	P	Ⓞ	R	T	F	R	E	T	G	E	A
T	I	A	N	U	Ⓛ	S	I	A	Y	R	O	O	N	T
A	R	E	O	E	I	C	P	E	R	F	P	R	I	I
M	C	S	C	N	A	H	A	R	D	U	I	P	L	O
O	S	X	I	T	O	R	T	R	A	H	C	D	N	N
T	E	M	I	N	T	E	R	P	R	E	T	C	O	A
U	D	O	E	L	T	N	E	M	E	G	A	N	A	M
A	N	A	L	Y	S	I	S	S	E	N	I	S	U	B

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Accurate, Administrative, Analysis, Automation, Business, Chart, Descriptive, Excel, Graph, Hard, Icon, Identification, Image, Information, Interpret, Management, Modify, Name, Number, Online, Phone, Photo, Program, Relevant, Report, Revenue, Search, Storage, Table, Technology, Text, Title, Tool, Topic, Updates, User, Video, Year

Yesterday's Answer: Scalpel

The NEW **Volume 70** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

LeBron sets NBA career scoring mark in Lakers' loss to OKC

LOS ANGELES (AP)—LeBron James became the NBA's career scoring leader on a stepback jumper late in the third quarter, passing Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's record during his 38-point performance in the Los Angeles Lakers' 133-130 loss to the Oklahoma City Thunder on Tuesday night.

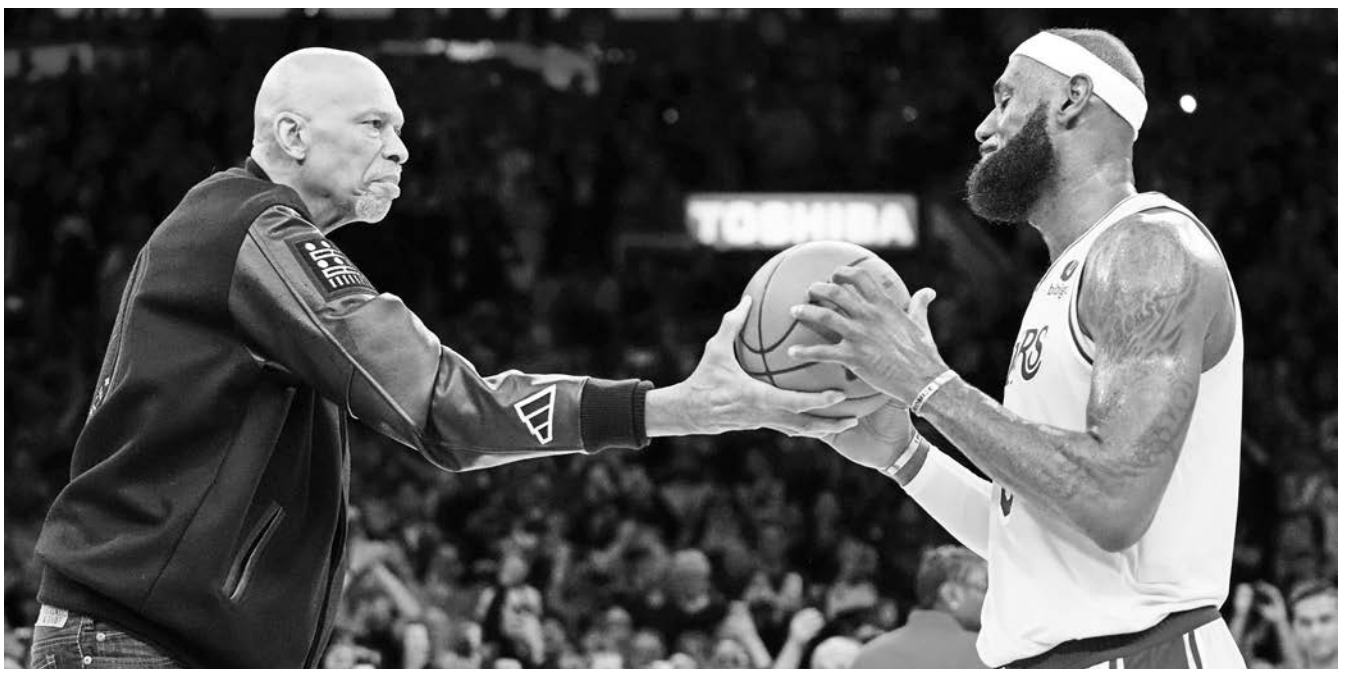
James surpassed the mark held since April 1984 by Abdul-Jabbar, who watched the game from a baseline seat near the Lakers' bench. Abdul-Jabbar then joined a clearly emotional James and NBA Commissioner Adam Silver on the court after the historic basket.

James' mother, wife and children also watched from courtside amid a celebrity-studded crowd that rose in waves of anticipation nearly every time he touched the ball.

James didn't let them down: He scored 20 points in the first half with a full showcase of the offensive talent that still shines blindingly after two decades in the NBA, and he tore through the record in a 16-point third quarter capped by that pretty jumper.

The game was stopped for about 10 minutes while James hugged his family and participated in a brief ceremony with Silver and Abdul-Jabbar.

"I just want to say thank you to the Laker faithful," James said. "You guys are one of a kind. To be able to be in the presence of such a legend as great as Kareem, it's very humbling."



AP

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, left, hands the ball to Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James after passing Abdul-Jabbar to become the NBA's all-time leading scorer during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Oklahoma City Thunder Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023, in Los Angeles.

James' latest moment of NBA history came at an important time for the Lakers, who are struggling to gain any ground as they attempt to avoid the humiliation of missing the playoffs for a second straight season. And while James hit his mark, the Lakers took another discouraging loss.

Anthony Davis managed just 13 points, and the Thunder never trailed in the second half. James scored only two points in the fourth quarter, putting him atop the career scoring list with 38,390 points—three ahead of Abdul-Jabbar.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 30 points and Jalen Williams had 25 for the Thunder, who moved 1 1/2 games ahead of the 13th-place Lakers near the bottom of the Western Conference standings.

The young Thunder appeared to feed off the energy created by James' momentous night, even if they couldn't guard him much. Oklahoma City jumped to a 15-point lead in the first half and hit nearly 60% of its shots.

SUNS 116, NETS 112

NEW YORK (AP)—Deandre Ayton matched his career high with 35 points, Devin Booker scored 19 in his first game since Christmas and Phoenix held off Cam Thomas and Brooklyn.

The 21-year-old Thomas led a late charge and finished with 43 points, becoming the youngest player in NBA history with three straight 40-point games. He had 44 and a career-high 47 points in his previous two games.

Mikal Bridges had 17 of his 21 points in the second half and played a key role in the defensive effort that cooled off Thomas just long enough for the Suns to build a 12-point lead with 2:25 remaining.

Booker missed the previous 21 games with a strained left groin.

Thomas rallied the Nets mostly from the free-throw line, and his intentional miss with 4.1 seconds remaining left the Suns with a 114-112 lead. He then fouled Ayton, who finished it off with two free throws after going 14 for 18 from the field and grabbing 15 rebounds.

NUGGETS 146, TIMBERWOLVES 112

DENVER (AP)—Nikola Jokic posted his 19th triple-double of the season by halftime and Denver rode a 49-point first quarter to a rout of Minnesota.

Jokic finished with 20 points, 16 assists and 12 rebounds. It was the second time in his career the big man has notched a triple-double by halftime. Jokic took a seat late in the third quarter.

Denver led 49-19 after the first quarter as the Nuggets shot 79.2% from the floor. The 49 points tied for the second-most in a quarter in the franchise's NBA history. Michael Porter Jr. led the way by scoring 19 of his 30 points in the opening period.

Aaron Gordon added 24 for the Nuggets, who set season highs in points and assists (44).

Anthony Edwards and Luka Garza both had 19 points for Minnesota.

KNICKS 102, MAGIC 98

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Jalen Brunson scored 25 points and made the go-ahead basket with 1:13 left, Julius Randle had 22 points and 14 rebounds, and New York beat Orlando.

Brunson's running bank shot put the Knicks up for good at 94-93. He then fed Jericho Sims for a dunk and a three-point lead.

The teams combined to shoot 10 free throw attempts in the final 7.7 seconds. The only miss was by Orlando's Paolo Banchero, who intentionally tried to set up a tying basket with 2.3 seconds remaining.

Markelle Fultz led the Magic with 21 points. Franz Wagner added 18 points and Banchero finished with 16 points after being held to four in the first half.

PELICANS 116, HAWKS 107

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Brandon Ingram scored 30 points, CJ McCollum added 21 and New Orleans beat Atlanta for its third straight victory.

Jonas Valanciunas had 16 points and 14 rebounds for New Orleans.

The Pelicans led 111-95 when Trey Murphy III hit his fourth 3-pointer of the game with 3:24 to go. Atlanta responded with a 7-0 run, but New Orleans held on.

Bogdan Bogdanovic scored 22 points for Atlanta and Dejounte Murray scored 19. Trae Young had 16 points and 16 assists.

GRIZZLIES 104, BULLS 89

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Ja Morant scored 34 points, Jaren Jackson Jr. added 24 points and five blocks, and Memphis rallied in the fourth quarter to beat Chicago.

Desmond Bane finished with 17 points and Brandon Clarke had 13 points and 13 rebounds for the Grizzlies, who stopped a three-game skid.

Nikola Vucevic had 28 points and 17 rebounds for the Bulls, whose three-game winning streak ended. Chicago played without leading scorer DeMar DeRozan because of right hip soreness.

Zach LaVine scored 24 points for Chicago.

Nets' Irving drama makes other East contenders look stable

By NOAH TRISTER
AP SPORTS WRITER

Blake Griffin is no stranger to trade drama. He was dealt from the Clippers to the Pistons in 2018, and last season he was playing for the Brooklyn Nets when they sent James Harden to Philadelphia in a February blockbuster.

These days, Griffin is with the Boston Celtics, who seem awfully stable when compared with those Nets.

"It's a tough time of year, but as far as this team goes, we're in a pretty good spot," Griffin said after Boston's win at Detroit on Monday night. "This team is very focused."

In the aftermath of another Brooklyn bombshell—the Nets broke up their remaining All-Star duo of Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving by trading Irving to Dallas—the other top teams in the Eastern Conference can feel pretty content with their situations. Boston has the best record in the NBA and a team that reached the Finals a season ago. Milwaukee has the league's longest current winning streak at eight games.

Even the 76ers, who haven't always been a picture of tranquility in recent years, have won nine of 11 and are third in the conference, just three games behind the Celtics.

The Nets had a stretch of 16 wins in 17 games from late November to early January, but Irving's recent trade request — and the fulfillment of it — now leave Brooklyn a very uncertain threat in the East. Cleveland jumped ahead of the Nets on Monday night and into fourth place in the conference.

"I don't think (the trade) affects Boston, Milwaukee — they're still at the top," Detroit coach Dwane Casey said before facing the Celtics. "It could affect Brooklyn. ... It's interesting for the league and it just lets you know that anything can happen."

Griffin said he was a little surprised the deal came together so quickly.

"I think Dallas has been wanting to get him for a little bit. Now probably feel like the West is kind of open right now and (the Mavericks are) trying to go for it," he said. "It's good for both sides. Kyrie wanted out and didn't want to be there and you know, hopefully both sides are happy."

As for why Brooklyn's star-studded team—which at one point included Durant, Irving and Harden — didn't reach its potential, there are a number of explanations.

"Health is one of them," Griffin said. "Those guys played like 16 games together or something. And, don't think the pieces were utilized the right way."

The Celtics recovered from a recent three-game losing streak and have won three of four. They're trying to hold off Milwaukee atop the East. The Bucks are a game back.

"We're very confident," Milwaukee big man Brook Lopez said. "We're just trying to play together and keep getting better."

The Bucks and Celtics have made deep runs into the postseason the past two years. Philadelphia hasn't reached the Finals since 2001.

The 76ers showed they might have that potential this season when Joel Embiid scored 47 points in a win over Denver late last month. Coach Doc Rivers understands it's important to go into the postseason rested and ready.

"The March schedule is tough, more because of the travel and the back-to-backs than the opponent," he said. "The opponents are all tough, we don't care about that. That's going to be an interesting month for us on what we're going to do as far as playing guys, resting guys."

The Celtics, Bucks and 76ers might make some moves of their own before Thursday's trade deadline, but they're unlikely to shake up their rosters the way Brooklyn did. The Nets had a dissatisfied star and decided to part with him. Boston, Milwaukee and Philadelphia, on the other hand, can deal from positions of strength.

"You know there's a lot going on in the NBA. It's exciting, fun for everyone to watch and listen and all that stuff," Lopez said. "But obviously we're really good at just staying focused, keeping our head grounded and focusing on what's next."

NBA reschedules 3 games to make up for 1 postponed by storm

DETROIT (AP)—The NBA has rescheduled three games after one game was postponed last week when the Detroit Pistons were stranded in Dallas due to a winter storm.

The Pistons will make up their home game against the Washington Wizards on March 7. The league also rescheduled games for both franchises to avoid either team playing on three straight days.

Detroit will host the Portland Trail Blazers on March 6, a day before previously scheduled. The Wizards will face the Milwaukee Bucks at home on March 5, also a day earlier than previously planned.

Mahomes, Hurts buoy Super Bowl teams amid QB injury spate

By JOSH DUBOW and HOWARD FENDRICH
AP SPORTS WRITERS

It matters that Patrick Mahomes is spectacularly talented, of course. Might matter just as much that he is almost always available for the Kansas City Chiefs.

Same goes for the Philadelphia Eagles and Jalen Hurts.

Those are big reasons the Chiefs and Eagles will meet in the Super Bowl—with AP NFL MVP and Offensive Player of the Year finalists Mahomes and Hurts taking the snaps—on Sunday in Glendale, Arizona. Sure, the San Francisco 49ers nearly managed to make it all the way to the championship game with a last-pick-of-the-draft rookie bumped all the way up to starter from No. 3 on the depth chart because of injuries to others. But then Brock Purdy hurt his elbow in the NFC title game at Philadelphia, leaving the Niners to try to rely on journeyman Josh Johnson, until he got a concussion ... meaning Purdy needed to go back in ... despite being unable to throw.

"That," 49ers coach Kyle Shanahan said, "was kind of just hard to stomach."

This season revealed, like never before, a glaring amount of instability at quarterback in the NFL, whether because of injury—the reason for nearly half of all changes during the regular season, according to an AP analysis—or poor performance. A total of 68 QBs started at least one game, an average of more than two per team and a record for a non-strike year.

What's more: 13 clubs, another high, needed to use at least three starters at the most important position in this, or any, sport. Some even turned to four — with the Arizona Cardinals using that many starting quarterbacks in a span of just four weeks.

Quarterback shuffling can go a long way toward altering a team's trajectory, as the Jets, Titans and Panthers found out on their way to missing the playoffs. The Dolphins made the postseason despite losing Tua Tagovailoa to a series of concussions, then had backup Teddy Bridgewater dislocate his pinky, leaving them with third-string rookie Skylar Thompson and his 18-for-45, two-interception performance in their wild-card elimination.

"When you, as a defender, see a guy at quarterback who has not played a lot, you are going to lick your chops and you assume he's not going to be in rhythm and you assume he's not going to be ready to go," Hall of Fame defensive back Ronnie Lott said. "Our coach, Bill Walsh, basically said, 'Hey, Ronnie, a team's only as good as the backup quarterback, because if the backup quarterback can't come in and do the things he needs to be able to do, a team is going to be in trouble.'"

And keeping the starter upright is almost always needed for success.

The top five regular-season teams in the AFC, including the Chiefs, had their No. 1 QB available for every regular-season game (and when Mahomes did leave a playoff game with a bad ankle, Chad Henne came in and delivered, leading a 98-yard TD drive in what turned out to be a seven-point victory).

In all, nine of the 14 participants in the postseason never had to turn to a backup QB to start.

The Eagles came close: Hurts missed two games with a bad shoulder; Philadelphia went 0-2 with Gardner Minshew in his place.

Seems obvious: Having your preferred QB1 available week after week makes your offense more likely to succeed. And that makes your team more likely to win.

AP
Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) throws against the Las Vegas Raiders during the first half of an NFL football game, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023, in Las Vegas.

Consider that the passer rating for QBs slated to be starters was about 10 points higher than for replacements. Or look at the Jacksonville Jaguars and Trevor Lawrence: He stuck around for 17 games and closed with five wins in a row—three against the QB-troubled Jets or Titans—to earn a playoff spot.

"It's certainly key, just because everybody continues to gel. You get the chemistry together. The receivers know, 'If I run this route on this step, the ball is going to be thrown to this point, just because we've done it a million times,'" Jaguars offensive coordinator Press Taylor said. "You can understand how (an injury absence) throws guys off."

Backup quarterbacks generally get zero practice time with the rest of the first-team offense during the season, so when the top choice at that spot is removed, there can be growing pains. Purdy was an exception, of course, and there have been others.

"Sometimes when a quarterback goes down," Cowboys guard Zack Martin said, "there's kind of a sense of panic in the locker room and on the team, like, 'What are we going to do?'"

Some of the season's dominant story lines involved sidelined QBs, from Miami's Tagovailoa to Baltimore's Lamar Jackson to the reigning Super Bowl champion Rams' Matthew Stafford, or efforts via officiating to protect them, whether the outcry among defenders over roughing-the-passer calls or the 15-yard penalty on Bengals defensive end Joseph Ossai for shoving an out-of-bounds Mahomes that helped KC get into position for the winning field goal in the AFC title game.

Lowering the number of quarterback injuries is "obviously a major priority for us," said Troy Vincent, the NFL's executive vice president of football operations. "It's critical that we examine ... where they're coming from. Are they legal hits? Are they in the pocket? Out of the pocket?"

Increased impatience when it comes to wins and losses accounts for some of the switching—the same sort of itchiness that leads to first-year coaches getting fired.

But it seems to always come back to injuries.

One potential cause: Rushing attempts by signal-callers reached a record high (2,309) and were also at their most per game, up 47% from 2012. That increases the opportunities to get hurt. Another: The 1,297 total sacks around the NFL were the third most ever and the average of 4.8 per game was the third-highest over the last nine years. (As an aside, Mahomes and Hurts might want to watch out on Super Sunday: The Eagles ranked No. 1, the Chiefs No. 2, in sacks.)

It's certainly possible, or at least plausible, that whatever the NFL does to try to keep quarterbacks safe isn't working — and, truly, can't work.

"At this point, you're hoping," Lott said, "your quarterback can withstand the pounding."

The 49ers under Shanahan are Exhibit A: The team kept one quarterback healthy only once in his six seasons — in 2019, when they just so happened to reach the Super Bowl.

They went through at least three starters in four of the last six seasons; this time, Trey Lance broke an ankle while running in Week 2 and Jimmy Garoppolo broke his foot on a sack in Week 13.

"It's awesome," star tight end George Kittle said sarcastically. "It's an experience. I just have a plethora of quarterbacks to choose from."

The rash of injuries for the 49ers and others raises the question of whether the league should bring back some form of the 1991-2010 rule that let teams have a third QB in uniform who would not count against the game-day roster limit and would be available in an emergency.

"We were scared to death when that rule ended, but you kind of forget about it, since you just don't see anyone have to go through it," Shanahan said. "But then you get reminded of how quickly a football game is over once that happens."

The NFL's Vincent said there have been "multiple discussions" about restoring the third quarterback rule, and the general manager advisory committee "is considering" putting it before the full membership.

"What you don't want is Christian McCaffrey playing quarterback," Lott said, referring to the 49ers' do-everything running back. "With all due respect—he's a hell of an athlete, but he needs to be where he is most effective, and that is running and catching the ball, not playing quarterback."

New receivers helped Chiefs get to Super Bowl without Hill

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—The Kansas City Chiefs lost one of the NFL's most dynamic receivers when Tyreek Hill was traded to the Miami Dolphins.

The loss did nothing to slow them down.

Kansas City revamped its receiving group in the offseason and the new players quickly meshed with quarterback Patrick Mahomes, riding a high-scoring wave all the way to the Super Bowl.

"I'm proud of our guys for the job that they've done," Chiefs coach Andy Reid said Tuesday. "We had a lot of new faces in there."

Kansas City's receiving crew was one of its biggest question marks heading into Sunday's Super Bowl against the Philadelphia Eagles.

The Chiefs placed Mecole Hardman on injured reserve Monday after he reinjured his pelvis in the AFC Championship against Cincinnati. Kansas City also faced the possibility of not having two others after JuJu Smith-Schuster left the AFC title game with knee inflammation and Kadarius Toney sprained his ankle.

The good news: both were back at practice this week.

"They look good," Reid said. "We'll see how it goes the rest of the week."

It went well most of the season.

All-Pro tight end Travis Kelce is still Mahomes' go-to target, catching 100 passes for 1,338 yards and 12 touchdowns.

With Hill in Miami having an All-Pro season, the Chiefs' new receivers—Hardman was the only returnee—have spread the field in an offense that led the NFL in scoring and total yards.

Smith-Schuster was Kansas City's big offseason pickup, signing with the Chiefs after five prolific seasons in Pittsburgh. The 6-foot-1, 215-pounder is a strong possession receiver who isn't afraid of catching passes over the middle. He has 78 catches for 933 yards and three touchdowns.

Marquez Valdes-Scantling, who spent his first four seasons with Green Bay, has field-stretching speed and led the NFL in yards per catch two years ago. Toney has given the Chiefs added depth since being traded from the New York Giants in October, catching 14 passes for 171 yards and two touchdowns in seven games.

Rookie Skyy Moore had problems with fumbles as a punt returner early in the season, but has been a versatile addition to the offense. He's filled the role Hill had on jet sweeps and had the key punt return to set up Kansas City's winning field goal in the AFC Championship.

"We lost an all-time great receiver in Tyreek Hill, someone that did a lot of great things for us, but we've got a lot of great receivers as well, " Mahomes said. "And coach (Eric) Bieniemy and coach Reid, they went in there and learned what their strengths were, and we maximized that this year."

It was good enough to get the Chiefs back to the Super Bowl for the third time in four seasons.

SNEED CLEARED

Cornerback L'Jarius Sneed cleared concussion protocol after he was injured against the Bengals, giving the Chiefs some needed experience in a young defensive secondary. The third-year cornerback was Kansas City's second-leading tackler with 108 this season, had 3.5 sacks and three interceptions.

Mahomes also is progressing from a high ankle sprain suffered against Jacksonville in the divisional round, though he still isn't 100%.

"I'll play through all injuries that the trainers will let me play through," he said. "As long as the trainers are OK for me to get out there, I'm going to play through it."

Darteros on target in A+ Division of SEDA League

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MARK RABAGO
6JMS Darteros players are ecstatic after receiving their championship trophies in the A+ Division of the 2022-2023 Saipan Electronic Darts Association Bud Light Dart League during the awards banquet last Sunday at Saipan World Resort.

6JMS Darteros showed its mastery over fellow master darts players by topping the A+ Division of the 2022-2023 Saipan Electronic Darts Association Bud Light Dart League that held its awards banquet last Sunday at Saipan World Resort.

The septuplet of Burth "Imported" Dacumos, Eric "Last Chance" Durano, Joey Gruy, George "Horhe" Medina, Andrew "Talayeru" Prado, Albert "Just Once" Guevara, and Omar "Lover Boy" Quindoza made JMS Sports Bar proud by finishing the season with a 199-157 win-loss record for a 56% clip.

Dacumos, who is the undisputed leader of the team, attributed the team's success to hard work and focus during games.

The Tondo, Manila in the Philippines native, who started playing darts in 1993, said 6JMS Darteros players usually practice three times before their designated game day and an hour before gametime.

Defending champion True North Mafia came in second with a 179-178 record, while 6JMS Gunners completed the Top 3 in the division at 170-187.

In the A Division, Tambayan Distorted ruled the roost with an impressive 213-132 mark, followed by 6JMS Drunken Dragons at 196-149 with Rendezvous MAFIA placing third at 183-162.

Tambayan Distorted is made up of Aldebert Lizama, Derick Ayuyyu, Garnett "Lights Out" Martin, David Buekis, Elton Santos, Tanner Maratita, David Terlaje, Jeremy Lizama, Eldin Maratita, Devon Pangelinan, and Jomar "Dart Vader" Danas. They are sponsored by Tambayan Bar and Grill.

Last Shot No Skills Just Luck, meanwhile, had the last laugh in the Latte Stone 6JMS Champinos (189-141) for second and third, respectively.

The champion team, which was sponsored by Last Shot Bar, is made up of David Buekis, Jose Kumoi, Jay Manas, Tanner Maratita, Garnett "Lights Out" Martin, Iran Manas, David Terlaje, and Henry "Savage" Sablan.

In the C Division, Tambayan Drunken Dartz was the only one left standing with a 218-97 record. It was actually a sweep for Tambayan Restaurant- and Tambayan Bar and Grill-sponsored teams as Tambayan Dart Hunter (204-111) and Tambayan G.V.D. Mix/C Division after winning it all with a 216-114 win-loss record. It was followed by Oleai Aimrite (204-126) and (188-127) also made it to the podium.

The Tambayan Drunken Dartz is made up of Chris "No Luv" Yug, Jomar "Dart Vader" Danas, Jhon "Choco" Lewis, James "Chief Kang" Welly, Diego Nepaíal, Chem Kaipat, Jay Manas, and Vince Cepeda.

In the Mr. SEDA and Miss SEDA competition, Russ "Mr. Pogi" Cruz and Henry "Savage" Sablan were the former's winners, while Frances Magofna topped the latter.

The rest of the division winners and other awards given out last Sunday during the awards banquet will be published in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune.*

AFTER 14 YEARS

Canape bids farewell to THFC

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tan Holdings Football Club officials and coaches pose with secretary general Ladyvir Canape during a farewell gathering.

Longtime team manager and general secretary for the Tan Holdings Football Club, Ladyvir Canape, bids the club a bittersweet farewell as she relocates to neighboring Guam this month.

Canape leaves her second home, Saipan, to relocate for work in Guam and joins her husband Guillermo Canape. The married couple spent 14 years supporting the football club, watching their players grow to eventually become national football players.

"I am heartbroken to leave the club, but I'm excited to start this new chapter. I'm relocating to Guam for work and to also be with my husband and my two kids who are staying there," said Canape. She leaves behind not only the football club, but also several non-profit organizations that she has joyfully served.

THFC president Alex Sablan expressed his gratitude and thanked Canape for her 14 years of service and commitment to the football club.

"We could not have been more favored to have a general secretary like Ladyvir who has always inspired the team to strive to achieve above the best," said Sablan.

According to Canape, she began as a parent supporting her children before becoming an assistant to the late Glicerio "Eli" Arago, who was the president of THFC before his untimely death, and eventually Canape gained the title as a THFC club manager. After the departure of then general secretary Ador Dimaano, Canape officially became THFC general secretary and has been for the past 12 years.

"In 2008, I was awarded Volunteer of the Year. The following year in February 2009, I was asked to volunteer myself for soccer. I was just a parent bringing my kids and watching their games until it finished… I became an assistant to [Arago] and did what needed to be done for the club," Canape recalls her first involvement with the club as a coach for the U6 division, where her two youngest sons participated in THFC.

Since joining THFC, Canape has developed coach-parent relationships with the parents of all the THFC soccer players. She is saddened to leave behind a club that she has helped build for the past 14 years.

Canape is proud of how much the club has grown and is proud to pass on her legacy to the new THFC general secretary Carline Sablan. Sablan is no stranger to the soccer scene as she was once a member and a women's division soccer player of the Kanoa Football Club.

"I want to thank outgoing general secretary Ladyvir for her many years of service to Tan Holdings Football Club. She has contributed significantly to the Club, and I wish her well as she begins a new chapter in life," said Sablan.

Additionally, Sablan thanked THFC president Alex Sablan and the club's leadership for the opportunity to be part of the THFC team and the confidence they have expressed in her through this appointment.

"Ladyvir leaves some pretty big shoes to fill, and I am definitely up for the challenge," said Sablan. In addition, she hopes to focus on encouraging THFC growth specifically the inclusion of female participation in our club especially in the early- to mid-adolescence age group (ages 11-17) and attracting, engaging, and retaining coaches.

The Tan Holdings Football Club Officers are Alex Sablan, president; Ariel Mariano, vice president; Judy Mendieta, secretary/treasurer; Carline Sablan, general secretary; Edna Nisola, deputy general secretary; Justine Nauta, team manager; and Ericka Santiago, team manager.

For more information or to participate in the Tan Holdings Football Club, contact THFC general secretary Carline Sablan at (670) 483-5634. ***(PR)***

NAPA

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going into the fourth and final quarter.

Leo Galarse and Jessie Bobares spearheaded a gallant payoff period uprising by Pacific Best Choice, but the rally came too little, too late as NAPA Auto Parts closed with the 14-point win.

Abuy and Basa paced NAPA Auto Parts in the win with 26 and 23 points, respectively. Center Jorge De Guzman also chipped in 12 markers. Pacific Best Choice's losing cause, meanwhile, was led by the 25 points of Galarse and 23 points of Bobares.

With the win, NAPA Auto Parts secured the fourth seed in next Sunday's one-game semifinal starting at 9am against undefeated Blue Haus. The other Final Four pairing beginning at 10:30am will have No. 2 Chang Ming Market against No. 3 JTM Saipan.

The winners will then duke it out for all the marbles in an afternoon playdate on Feb. 19, also at the Koblerville Basketball Court.

The masters championship between Blue Haus and JSN Construction is also set in the afternoon of Feb. 19 with the battle for third in both divisions set in the morning.

NAPA Auto Parts 89 – Abuy 26, Basa 23, De Guzman 12, Ege 8, Fundador 7, Carag 6, Esmundo 5, Tibayan 5, Diaz 4.Pacific

Best Choice 75 – Galarse 25, Bobares 23, Chua 6, Hipolito 6, Natividad 5, Albert 4, Camacho 2, Augusto 2.

Scoring by quarters: 27-16, 58-32, 68-49, 89-75.

TATAGAS

From Page 20

strong defense at the net held the win for the Tatagas.

Despite the Tottots' Bernard Villagomez desperately trying to save his team with spikes and digs which brought them to a close 8-13 game, the Tatagas was handed the win after a misplaced spike ended the Tottots' run for a comeback.

In other results that night, ChaCha Ocean View Middle School lost to Agape Christian School, 16-21, 15-21; Hopwood Middle School defeated Mount Carmel School, 22-21, 21-19; Grace Christian Academy beat Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, 21-15, 21-4; and HMS JV won against DMS JV, 23-21, 21-15.

In Pool A standings, TMS is on top with three wins; DMS, HMS, and Saipan Community School are at 1-1; and Mount Carmel School have yet to win with three losses.

In Pool B Standings, ACS leads with three wins; FMS is 1-2; Saipan International School still has one win; GCA is 1-1; and COVMS has three losses.

In the junior varsity standings, HMS JV has one win, DMS is 1-1, and SCS JV has one loss.

DR. KRUM

From Page 20

that anybody from Saipan has played in."

Krum, who's turning 70 years old this Feb. 15, is actually the youngest player in his division, "Not many 70-year-olds get to say that!" he exclaimed.

With the competition, he said "I expect the competition to be strong. There are over 700 players signed up to compete in the tournament. All of the top pros will be competing."

As for what his pickleball rating is, Krum said "I am self-rating myself as a 4.0 player, based on competition here and in Guam. I'll find out at this tournament if my assessment is close!

He added, "I will come out of the tournament with a DUPR rating which is the official rating system for pickleball."

The Dynamic Universal Pickleball Rating is the most accurate and only global rating system in pickleball. All players, regardless of their age, gender, location, or skill, are rated on the same scale between 2.00-8.00 based on their match results.

For those who don't know what pickleball is, it is a cross between tennis, ping-pong, and badminton. You can watch to learn more or join their daily night games at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

LeBron sets NBA career scoring mark in Lakers' loss to OKC

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Sports

Darteros on target in A+ Division of SEDA League

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NAPA Auto Parts makes Final Four

MARK RABAGO

NAPA Auto Parts Zach Diaz blocks the layup attempt of Pacific Best Choice's Brian Natividad in their game in the open division of the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League last Sunday at the Koblerville Basketball Court.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

NAPA Auto Parts relied on the sweet-shooting duo of James Abuy and Preston Basa to oust Pacific Best Choice and in the process barge into the Final Four of the open division of the Legends Sports Association Invitational Basketball League.

With Abuy and Basa connecting from the land of plenty all game long, NAPA Auto Parts routed Pacific Best Choice, 89-75, last Sunday at the Koblerville Basketball Court.

Abuy got NAPA Auto Parts going in the first quarter as the gunner exploded for 12 points to give them a 27-16 lead.

It was Basa's turn to smolder in the second quarter as the many-time national player equalled Abuy's 12-point quarter in the first with a dozen of his own, which allowed NAPA Auto Parts to go up, 58-32, at the half.

The duo slowed down a bit at the start of second half, but fortunately for NAPA Auto Parts, their defense continued to limit Pacific Best Choice and they led, 68-49,

See NAPA on Page 19

Dr. Krum to play in pickleball pro tourney

MARK RABAGO

Pickleball Federation of the Northern Mariana Islands president Nelson Krum, left, in action during a tournament at the Capitol Hill tennis courts in this file photo.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Pickleball Federation of the Northern Mariana Islands president Dr. Nelson Krum is bound for his first professional pickleball tournament—the Arizona Grand Slam in Mesa, Arizona—on Feb. 16 and 17.

Before the Grand Slam, the dentist at the Paradise Dental Spa will first be competing in the PebbleCreek 2023 in Goodyear, Arizona today, Feb. 9, with doubles partner Dotti Berry from Washington state. His partner for the Grand Slam is Brian Blanchard from Colorado.

"I have not met or played with either of them, so it will be fun figuring [out] our styles, strengths, and weaknesses. They are both rated as 4.0 players for this tournament," Krum said.

The soon-to-be 70-year-old was asked how he felt heading into his first professional tournament and he said, "I am getting nervous about the upcoming tournament in Arizona! This is my first sanctioned tournament, and as far as I know the first sanctioned pickleball tournament

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Tatagas undefeated in MS boys v-ball

LEIGH GASES

Matthew Peters from Dandan Middle School, left, goes up against a Tanapag Middle School varsity player during the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Volleyball League last Tuesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Tanapag Middle School Tatagas boys varsity volleyball team is currently undefeated with three wins in the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Middle School Volleyball League 2022-2023 after their recent game last Tuesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Tatagas slipped past Dandan Middle School in an exhilarating three-set match after winning the first set, 21-17, losing the second set, 10-21, and bouncing back in the tie-breaker, 15-9.

The rotation of Javen Camacho, Roman Teigita, Ethan and Stanley Magofna, Jan Aeden Cruz, Jon Aeden Pinaula, Konin McCale, Benigno Sablan, Ali Santos Jr., Collin Maratita, Jesse Peredo, Kinluk Sharry, and Wenio Wenio put a stop to the Tottots early on in the last set, as multiple aces and a

See TATAGAS on Page 19